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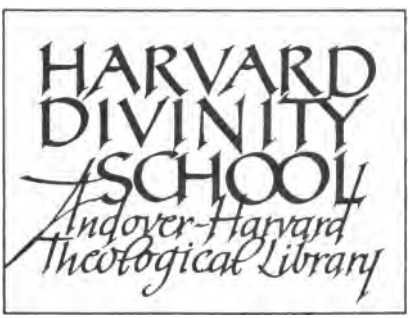
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THE

ANTI-SATISFACTIONIST;

OR THE

Salvation of Sinners

BY THE

FREE GRACE OF GOD:

BEING

AN ATTEMPT TO EXPLODE

THE PROTESTANT, AS WELL AS POPISH, NOTION OF SALVATION BY HUMAN MERIT, AND TO PROMOTE THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE SUFFICIENCY OF DIVINE MERCY FOR ALL WHO ARE PENITENT.

IN THREE PARTS.

BY RICHARD WRIGHT.

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Prove all things. PAUL.

"Read, examine, and judge for thyself."

He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him. SOLOMON.

Truth is mighty, and whatever be its consequences must always prevail.

SIR WILLIAM JONES.

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TO THE

FRIENDS OF FREE ENQUIRY,

AND OPPOSERS OF POPISH MYSTERY,

WHO

REGARDING THE NEW TESTAMENT AS THE ONLY STANDARD

OF CHRISTIAN FAITH,

AND COMMON SENSE AS THE BEST EXPOSITOR

OF THE ESSENTIAL DOCTRINES OF RELIGION, HAVE CAST

OFF THE YOKE

OF HUMAN TRADITION, CREEDS AND SYSTEMS,

AND NOBLY DARED

TO ADOPT RATIONAL VIEWS OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST;

THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE,

WITH MUCH RESPECT, INSCRIBED

BY THEIR HUMBLE AND

DEVOTED SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is long since the writer of the following pages first felt a conviction of the importance of divine truth, and that every thing ought to be sacrificed to the discovery and promotion of it. For years he has felt the persuasion that unless a man can make up his mind to part with his ease, reputation, friends, worldly advantage, and even life itself, should the cause of truth call for such painful sacrifices, he is not fully qualified to act the part of a faithful minister of Jesus Christ. He has long been accustomed to encounter obloquy, the loss of valued friends, and many temporal disadvantages, for the sake of a good conscience; still he rejoices in having followed the convictions of his own mind: and is prepared to meet with firmness any reproach or inconvenience to which the publication of this work may subject him. He wishes his readers to be apprised that, if they adopt and profess the sentiments inculcated by him, they ought to prepare themselves patiently to endure reproach and painful treatment from reputed orthodox christians of the present day.

Those who cannot bear to be suspected of heretical pravity, who have not courage to meet the frowns, and bear the reproaches, of those assuming men who monopolize to themselves the title of orthodox and evangelical, had better at once lay aside the use of reason in matters of religion, that they may move on in sectarian trammels without any troublesome convictions; for if they once begin to bring every religious opinion to the scrutiny of reason, it is highly probable, they will soon become dissatisfied with some part of their creed, and be suspected by their brethren of heresy: yet they should remember that, so far as they sacrifice their reason to the dogmas of a party, they degrade themselves in the scale of being, and act unworthy the character of sincere lovers of truth, of the followers of Jesus, who sacrificed his life in the cause of truth, in opposition to the reputed Orthodoxy of the men of his age. Far more honorable and advantageous will it be found to have truth with reproach, &c. than to slumber on in error; with ignoble ease, amidst the caresses of our religious and connexions.

THE DESIGN OF THE FOLLOWING WORK.

IN writing and publishing this work the following ends are proposed.

1. To attempt the removal of those dismal shades which were drawn over the all glorious character of the Father of mercies during the dark ages of superstition, so far as they remain to the present day: in particular that foul stain which the modern notion of atonement fixes upon it, by the supposition that he saves sinners, not of his pure goodness and mercy simply, but because he hath been bought off from the execution of his vengeance, by the expiatory sufferings of an innocent person, against whom all the fierceness of his wrath was directed, and who endured the whole weight of his displeasure.

2. To vindicate the justice of God from the calumnious charge of being a principle of revenge, or mere retaliation, a principle in which not the least degree of mercy or compassion is ever to be found.

3. To show that the gospel is not a plan of bargain, contract, sale and purchase, according to which God bestows every blessing, not of pure love and mercy, but in consideration of an equivalent which he received for it: and that, on the contrary, it is a system of pure grace, or divine favor, flowing from the infinite, and unmerited, love of the Almighty, who bestows salvation and everlasting life as free gifts, by Jesus Christ, without any consideration distinct

from his own mercy, but the penitence and submission of the offender.

4. To explode the absurd and dangerous notion that sinners may become righteous without their own personal conformity, in heart and life, to the righteous will of God by the transfer and imputation of Christ's righteousness to them: and to establish the important principle, in morality and religion, that no man can become righteous any further than he attains right dispositions and performs right actions.

5. To show that Christ is not the procuring cause of the favor and mercy of God to sinners; but the organ by which the divine truth and grace, mind and will are revealed, the medium through which salvation and everlasting life are communicated.

6. To contribute a mite towards a further reformation from the errors of popery, and the errors of protestants founded on popish principles, especially in reference to those false notions which are deemed by many essential doctrines of the gospel.

7. To roll away a stone of reproach from christianity; on which T. Paine, according to his own account, in his age of reason, having stumbled in his childhood fell into mere deism; and which has probably helped to lead many into infidelity.

Such are the objects kept in view throughout the following pages.

OBJECTIONS ANTICIPATED.

MANY objections will no doubt be made to this work. Some persons may object to the title, *Anti-satisfactionist*, and be ready to ask, was not what Christ did perfectly satisfactory to his God and Father? I answer yes, I mean not to convey the least intimation to the contrary; but I mean to insist that what he did was not satisfactory for the want of righteousness, and moral excellence, in others. I have taken the word, *Anti-satisfactionist*, as the leading title because I could think of no other term that would at once so well express the leading character and design of the work.

Many persons will object to the work as being too controversial. To these I would say that neither Christ nor his Apostles shunned controversy when error was to be detected and exploded: that had not the first christians exposed the errors of the pagan idolatry and superstition, its empire might have remained unshaken: that had not the reformers combated the errors of popery its abominations might have prevailed to the present day; the scriptures never have been published in the vernacular languages of Europe, nor that light have blessed the world which has been elicited in these latter times: that no religious truth can be mentioned, which has been recovered from the darkness of the middle ages, without the aid of controversy: and that, badly as controversy has too generally been conducted, we owe to it much of the religious improvement which the world has attained: hence I conclude that controversy is not in itself an evil, but a useful method of eliciting truth.

It may be thought by some that my work comes before the public with too much an air of defiance. On this point I have only to observe, that feeling a full conviction of the erroneousness of the notions I oppose, and of the truth and importance of the doctrines for which I contend, I wish to appear before the public with an open face, and with that fearless integrity, and unreserved disclosure of my sentiments, which become the unbiassed advocate for truth: and add that we seem to have arrived at a period when the doctrines we espouse require that, like the intrepid reformers from popery, we should boldly enter the strong holds of our opponents, fearlessly attack the corruptions of christian doctrine and expose their deformity to open view. I trust, however, though my attack upon a leading tenet of reputed Orthodoxy is open and direct, it is conducted with that gentleness and candor which become the gospel of Christ.

HISTORICAL NOTICE.

IN the Universalist's Miscellany for October 1800, *a question was proposed by a gentleman who styled himself INQUIRO, respecting the truth or falsehood of the notion of Christ's having made satisfaction for the sins of men. To this question I took the liberty of replying in the next Number of the said Miscellany: and added a Letter on the doctrine of atonement, in the Number for January,* 1801. *By this time some persons began to be alarmed, an essential doctrine of the gospel was supposed to be attacked. In the same Number in which my remarks on atonement were inserted appeared a Letter from a* Mr. J. Weaver *in opposition to what I had said against the notion of satisfaction for sins: in reply to which I barely stated, in the next Number, that what* Mr. Weaver *had advanced not affecting my positions, arguments, or conclusions, I should make no rejoinder. In the Number for June following another opponent showed himself; and, without attempting to reason on the subject, produced several passages of scripture, which he supposed to decide the point. His Letter was signed* T. *On the passages quoted by* T. *I offered my thoughts in the Number for August. I heard no more from* T. *but in the Number for October appeared a correspondent, who signed his Letter* N. N. *He stated some difficulties, and referred to several passages of scripture which he wished to have examined. To* N. N. *I replied in several Letters, which appeared in subsequent Numbers of the U. M. in one of them I assigned my reasons for rejecting the notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sin. This aroused* Mr. Jerram, *a Clergyman in the Establishment. This gentleman wrote a long Letter in reply to my reasons, which was inserted in the U. M. for March and April,* 1802. *(Now called the Universal Theological Magazine.) This Letter he followed with several others in defence of the modern notion of atonement. His Letters were signed* Hilasteriophilus. *I replied to* Mr. Jerram, *in a series of Letters, which were inserted in the same work. To my answer* Mr. Jerram *did not think proper to offer any reply; though the Magazine was still open to him. However he, in consequence of my reply, made some material alterations in his Letters, suppressed some passages, dropped some reasonings and substituted others, &c. In this improved state he republished his Letters; but, though he availed himself of my reply in correcting and altering them, he carefully avoided dropping the slightest hint that any reply had been published. Hence I thought duty called upon me to republish my answer, that it might have a more general circulation, and that I might meet my opponent's arguments in their present form: but, judging it best to treat the subject more at large, I have penned the following work, which is now submitted to the examination of the public. Criticisms and references to the original I have as much as possible avoided, it being my wish to adapt my reasoning to the common Reader: I have had recourse to these only when justice to the cause of truth seemed imperiously to demand it.*

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Preliminary observations on acceptance with God.

BEFORE we enter upon the principal subject discussed in this work, it may be useful to take a general view of the way of acceptance with God, as taught by Moses and the Prophets, Christ and the Apostles.

The writings of Moses clearly teach the mercifulness of God: Exo. xxxiv. 6,7. they represent him as, symbolically, dwelling on the mercy-seat, and as showing mercy unto thousands of generations, chap. xx. vi. They teach that he can rescind his threatenings, without any violation of the rectitude of his character, or infraction of the established rules of his government, or departure from the principles of his holy law; for they state that he did it in several instances in his dealings with his people. Deut. xxxii. 26. Moses taught the Israelites that God accepted them to be his people on the mere ground of his free favor. chap. vii. 7, 8. He also assured them that God would continue to accept, preserve

and bless them, as a peculiar people, on the ground of their obedience: Exo. xix. 5, 6. And that their enjoying the divine favor, and inheriting life, depended on their obedience. Deut. xxx. chap. He further informed them that if, after they had sinned, they repented, returned to the LORD, and became obedient to his voice, he would have compassion on them, and restore them to to the enjoyment of his favor, *For* (saith he) *the LORD thy God is a merciful God.* chap. iv. 29, 30, 31. He also taught that God would not accept those who continued disobedient; but inflict on them his terrible judgments. chap. xxviii. The Mosaic writings also show that Enoch was translated on account of the superior excellence of his moral character; Gen. v. 24 *for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God:* Heb. xi. 5. that Noah found peculiar favor with the LORD, and escaped the destruction which came upon the world of the ungodly, because he was a just man; for God testified, *Thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation:* Gen. vi. 8, 9. & vii. 1. that Abram became righteous by believing what God revealed, and by doing what he commanded, that on this ground he inherited the blessing: chap. xxii. 18.

David describes God as forgiving sins on the ground of his mercy, asserts that he will give to his creatures that which their moral state renders most fit for them to receive, and that the LORD recompensed him according to his righteousness, and according to the cleanness of his hands: he supposed

nothing but penitence necessary on the part of a sinner in order to his being pardoned, and that moral excellence was the only condition on which the divine favor could be enjoyed. Psal. xxxii. 1. & ciii. 3—8. 2 Sam. xxii. 25, 26, 27. Psalms xv. & xxiv. & cxii. & li. 16. 17.

Solomon, at the dedication of the temple, in the prayer which he uttered in the hearing of the whole congregation of Israel, 2 Chron. vi. chap. though a considerable part of it relates to God's forgiving the sins of the people, mentions no condition of pardon but penitence and prayer. He speaks of God's acting towards men according to their moral state, even in the article of forgiveness: v. 30. of his rendering to every man according to all his ways. The only condition he mentions Pro. i. 23. of sinners being made wise and happy is their turning at God's reproof. He declares that the good man shall be satisfied from himself. chap. xiv. 14. The only condition of obtaining mercy he represents to be confession of sin and amendment. chap. xxviii. 13. In stating the whole of what relates to man, both his duty and happiness, he only mentions the fearing of God and the keeping of his commandments. Ecclesiastes xii. 13.

The Prophet *Isaiah* clearly states the availableness of repentance, for the acceptance of sinners with God, without any other consideration but the divine mercy. On condition of their amending their ways and doings, he assured the people that, though their sins were as scarlet, they should be white as snow,

though they were red like crimson, they should be as wool: chap. i. 18. i. e. that the foulest stains should be washed out on the condition of genuine repentance. He represents God's showing mercy, and pardoning sin, simply on the ground of the sinner's forsaking his evil ways and returning to him: chap. lv. 7. and his looking to, and dwelling with the humble and contrite, *to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* chap. lvii. 15. & lxvi. 2. He describes God as saying that he will defer his anger, and spare sinners, not from any consideration distinct from himself, but purely for his own name sake, from a regard to the glory which results to him from the exercise of his mercy. chap. xlviii. 9—11. When describing those who shall be secured from the awful judgments of heaven, he represents their safety as the consequence of the goodness of their moral state. *He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, and shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil: he shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks:* chap. xxxiii. 15, 16. Throughout his prophecies he represents God as acting towards nations and individuals according to their moral state. It was the want of virtuous principles and righteous conduct among the people that he so warmly reproved, not their neglect of sacrifices. This Prophet having so clearly expressed himself on the foregoing points, a few detached passages in his

writings ought not to be construed in favor of opposite sentiments.

The Prophet *Jeremiah* was much employed in calling the Jews to repentance. A prominent feature in his writings is, that without repentance nothing can save a sinful people from destruction; and that, on the ground of his mercy, God will pardon and accept those who are penitent. *Only acknowledge thine iniquity——Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings——O Jerusalem, wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved——If ye thoroughly amend your ways, and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.* chap. iii. 13,—22. & iv. 14. & vii. 5, 6, 7. Such was the language of this Prophet, when speaking in the name of *Jehovah,* to a sinful people. He also plainly teaches that God will rescind his threatenings, whenever those against whom they are denounced turn from the evil of their ways. chap. xviii. 7, 8.

The Prophet *Ezekiel* plainly teaches the efficacy of repentance, that it is the only consideration God requires in order to his admitting the sinner to mercy. *If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not*

die: all his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die: if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live. chap. xviii. 21, 22—27. & xxxiii. 14, 15, 16. From these passages it is evident the Prophet had no idea of any consideration being required, in order to a sinner's attaining life, but repentance and obedience. It should be noticed that, though the LORD had threatened the sinner with certain death, he positively declares, that upon his repentance he would rescind the threatening: and that all his sins should be cancelled upon his return to the paths of virtue.

Daniel, when confessing the sins of his people, and imploring forgiveness of the LORD, mentions no consideration but what ariseth from the character of God: on that ground simply he intreated pardon and acceptance, saying, O LORD, *the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments*—— O LORD, *righteousness belongeth unto thee*——*To the*

LORD *our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him——We do not present our supplication before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.* O LORD, *hear;* O LORD, *forgive;* O LORD, *hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God.* chap. ix. 4,—7, —9—18, 19. He did not suppose that God would be moved to pardon sinners, and receive them into favor, by any foreign consideration; but that he would do it from the mercifulness of his own nature, and for the glory of his own name.

Hosea, declared that God desired mercy, and not sacrifice: that he would betroth sinners unto himself in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies: that he would withhold his favor till they acknowledged their offence: that if the people returned to the LORD he would heal them: that, if they sowed to themselves in righteousness, they should reap in mercy; if they sought the LORD he would rain righteousness upon them. chap. ii. 19. & v. 15. & vi. 1—6. & x. 12. From such declarations nothing can be collected but that God acts from his natural placability, and accepts his creatures on the ground of their penitence and obedience.

Joel, when announcing the calamities which were coming on the people for their sins, delivered this message from God. *Therefore also now, saith the* LORD *turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rent your heart and not your garments*, and turn

unto the LORD *your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.* chap. ii. 12, 13. Here no ground of hope is placed before a sinful people, but the mere mercy and grace of God, no method of averting punishment mentioned but repentance and turning to God.

Amos, after describing the manifold sins of the people, informed them that, if they would seek good and not evil, they should live, and God would be with them. He encouraged them to hope for the divine favor, if they returned to the paths of rectitude; but assured them that all their sacrifices were of no avail so long as they neglected moral purity. chap. v. 14, 15—21, 22. This was making obedience to God the only ground of acceptance with him.

Jonah, was deeply impressed with the sentiment that God exerciseth mercy, and withholds the punishment threatened, simply in consideration of the repentance of sinners. It was this deterred him from going to *Nineveh* when first commanded: and the truth of this sentiment was verified in the case of the Ninevites. chap. iv. 2.

Micah, shows the inefficacy of sacrifices, and teaches that what God requires of men, in order to their enjoying his favor, is, to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with him. chap. vi. 6, 7, 8. He declares that God pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by transgression, because he delighteth in mercy. chap. vii. 18.

Zephaniah, shows that the only way to escape punishment is by following after righteousness and meekness. chap. ii. 3.

Zechariah, represented obedience as the only thing that can render men safe and happy. chap. i. 3, 4. & vii. 9—14. & viii. 16, 17.

All the *Prophets* bear witness to the mercifulness of God: they set forth his mercy as the only ground of hope to sinners, and speak of his acting merely from the dictate of his mercy in pardoning and saving the penitent. Without hesitation, they speak of God's rescinding his threatenings, when the threatened became penitent; not seeming to suppose that for him to do so could be the least violation of his justice. They leave the divine supremacy, his sovereign will, unfettered, and seem to conceive of no end in the threatenings of God but the reformation of the offender; if that end be obtained punishment is averted. Of the efficacy of repentance, as the consideration of pardon, they seem never to have entertained a doubt. The penitent they always encouraged to hope in the divine mercy, and ever exhibited mercy and forgiveness to the rebellious, on the sole condition of their repenting and turning to God, without discovering the least apprehension that he required any thing more in order to his pardoning offenders. That God would not accept any who continued disobedient they constantly affirmed. That he would never fail to accept those who obeyed him, and that

obedience is the condition on which his favor is enjoyed, they uniformly asserted. Such was the doctrine of the Prophets, such the views they had of God, and of the way in which man is accepted with him.

As the writers of the New Testament were Jews, and received their first rudiments of religious knowledge from the law and the Prophets; as they professed to teach none other things, as leading points of doctrine, than what Moses in the law, and the Prophets had written; and as they frequently brought the proof of their doctrine from the Old Testament; it is reasonable to conclude that, whatever particular forms of expression they might use on certain occasions, they agreed, in all leading points, with the ancient Hebrew writers. Hence we may suppose they would teach the same doctrine respecting the mercifulness of the Deity, the sufficiency of repentance, and obedience to the truth, as conditions of forgiveness and salvation, and the acceptableness of good works, as the Prophets had taught before them; nor ought passages to be detached from their writingsand construed in a light contrary to their avowed principles.

On examination it will be found that the messengers of God, under the new dispensation of the gospel, taught the same things, respecting the way of acceptance, as all the Prophets had done before the coming of the Messiah.

The gospel is undoubtedly a system of divine mer—

cy and grace; but in this system conditions are certainly comprehended. The conditions are repentance, faith, and obedience. Without a compliance with these conditions sinners cannot be saved. If it appear that Christ and his Apostles insisted on no conditions of acceptance, distinct from the divine mercy and grace, but what the creature himself is called to perform, it will follow that no other condition, or consideration, can be necessary, in order to the salvation of men, and their acceptance with God.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, taught the efficacy of repentance, it was the grand theme of his ministry; he preached the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins, and insisted on the necessity of real personal righteousness, in order to acceptance with God. Luke iii. 9—14.

Christ himself was a preacher of repentance and righteousness. He made known the love of God to men, published the riches of divine grace, and declared the mercy of God to a guilty world; but at the same time he insisted that without repentance there can be no salvation. Luke xiii. 3—5. God sent him to bless mankind; but it was by turning them from their iniquities. Acts iii. 26. He declared that a leading object of his mission was to call sinners to repentance. Mark ii. 17. To deny the efficacy of repentance would be to render the mission of Christ a nullity. In his sermon on the mount he appears altogether in the character of a practical prea-

cher. He taught that to do the will of God, and seek to be like him, is the only way to gain admittance into his kingdom, that the condition of forgiveness is our forgiving others, and that the man who heareth his sayings and doeth them builds on a good foundation, that our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees or we shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. (See Mat. 5, 6 & 7 chap.) When he upbraided the cities in which most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not, he spoke of their impenitence as the sole cause of their destruction, chap. xi. 20—24. He taught that men will be accepted or rejected according to the use they make of the talents intrusted to their care; that when brought to judgment, they will be received to glory, or doomed to punishment, according to their works. chap. 25. Throughout his ministry he taught men to expect salvation, and every blessing, on the ground of the love, mercy and favor of God, solely on the terms of repentance and obedience to the gospel. He accepted those as his nearest relatives who did the will of his heavenly Father. Mark iii. 35. When a young man enquired of him what he must do to inherit eternal life, he directed him to keep the commandments of God. chap. x. 19. He informed the lawyer who tempted him that if he kept the commandments he should live. Luke x. 25—28. He represented God as accepting penitent sinners, on the ground of his free mercy, just as a compassionate father would his

offending child when he saw him turn from his folly. Luke 15 chap. He said to his disciples *if ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them :* John xiii. 17, which implies that happiness can be attained only by obedience. He taught them that they should continue accepted if they continued in his word, and that if they did not they should be rejected. chap. xv. 1—8.

Peter called upon the crucifiers of Jesus to repent and be converted, that their sins might be blotted out. Acts iii. 19. He said to Simon the sorcerer, *Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray to God, if perhaps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee.* chap. viii. 22. He testified to Cornelius and his friends, *of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons ; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.* chap. x. 34, 35. This shows that God will always accept the obedient. In his second Epistle (chap. i. 5—11.) he shows that it is by their obedient conduct christians are to make their calling and election sure, and obtain an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

James declares that *pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keep himself unspotted from the world.* James i. 27. He asserts that a man is justified by works and not by faith only, and

that faith is dead and useless if it be alone, chap. ii. 14—26.

John teaches that God forgives sins on the ground of penitential confession. 1 John i. 9. He cautions christians against being deceived by the supposition that they might be made righteous without personal obedience, and assures them that he who doeth righteousness, and he only, is righteous. chap. iii. 7. He asserts that he who doeth good is of God, and that he who doeth evil hath not seen God. 3 John 11.

Paul declares that the tenor of his preaching was, *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ:* (Acts xx. 21.) and faith, or believing, in the New Testament, means a practical credence: hence it is evident he maintained the efficacy of repentance, and that men are accepted as they become obedient. He shows that God is no respecter of persons, that he will render to every man according to his deeds, that if the uncircumcised Gentile, obeyed him, according to the light of nature, he should no more be excluded from his favor than the circumcised Jew, Rom. 2 chap. He says, *we labor that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* 2 Cor. v. 9, 10. This is evidently teaching that final acceptance will take place on the ground of obedience. The same sentiment appears, Gal. vi. 7, 8. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a*

man soweth, that shall he also reap : for he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption : but he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting. As it is in the dispensation which Christ hath introduced and confirmed by his death, at the head of which God hath placed him, that we are brought nigh and accepted; and as we are brought to repent, believe and obey by the gospel, from which we receive all our knowledge of divine grace and salvation; and further, as it is by our becoming like Christ in our temper and conduct that we are approved of God; we are said to be made accepted in him. Eph. i. 6.

This mere glance at what Jesus and his Apostles taught, respecting the way of acceptance with God, may be taken as a specimen of what may be found in the New Testament at large. If the whole be carefully examined, it will be found that the divine placability is uniformly maintained, the infinite love of God to his creatures constantly asserted, his rich grace and free mercy exhibited, as the only ground of hope to sinners, and of everlasting consolation to christians. It will be found that the first teachers of the gospel insisted on the necessity of repentance, faith, and obedience, in order to the attainment of salvation and acceptance with God : that they maintained the efficacy of repentance in fitting the sinner for the reception of divine mercy, and that all who obey, according to the light and ability given them, are accepted. Such appears to be the substance of what

Moses and the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles taught, respecting the way of acceptance with God. If we do but depart from iniquity, cast ourselves upon the divine mercy, obey to the extent of our knowledge and ability, we need not fear that God will reject us; for HE IS LOVE, and *delighteth in mercy.* His mercy affords refuge for all the miserable, and all the riches of his favor are provided for those who do his will. Christ, because he obeyed him in all things, was declared his beloved, or approved, son, and those who become themost like him, will be most approved of God.

THE

ANTI-SATISFACTIONIST, &c.

PART THE FIRST.

CONTAINING

Chapter 1. The doctrine of Satisfaction stated in the words of its defenders, and refuted by the words of scripture.

Chap. 2. The doctrine of Satisfaction refuted by argument.

Chap. 3. An attempt to account for the rise of the doctrine among christians, and its continuance to the present day.

Chap. 4. The Salvation of sinners by the free grace of God.

THE

ANTI-SATISFACTIONIST, &c.

PART THE FIRST.

CHAPTER FIRST.

The doctrine of Satisfaction stated in the words of its defenders, and refuted by the words of scripture.

IT must be of great importance to understand on what ground God will accept sinners, and receive them to the enjoyment of his favor. Important as this point is christians have long been, and still are, divided in their opinions respecting it: consequently it must be allowed that some wrong notions, concerning the way of salvation, still remain among the professors of the gospel. We ought not hastily to conclude on which side the mistake lies; but to compare, with the utmost candor and diligence, the opinions of christians, of different parties, with what God hath revealed in the sacred writings, that we may clearly understand the path of life for ourselves. To point out what, upon the most careful examination, we think the errors of our christian brethren, with candor and moderation, ought to give no disgust; on the contrary it should excite fresh attention to the *gospel, and may* lead to the further knowledge

of truth. My design in this chapter is to state wh I conceive to be a grand mistake among the follow ers of Jesus, and to exhibit the contrary doctrine i the words of the sacred penmen. But I would firs premise three things.

1. We can judge of the sentiments maintained by any class or description of christians only by the language they generally use to express their views of religious truth; nor can it be contrary to candor and liberality to understand them to mean what their own words, fairly construed, seem naturally to convey: consequently it cannot be unfair to place before the reader the notion of Christ's making satisfaction fo the sins of men in the words of its acknowledge advocates.

2. We are not to draw a representation of the opinions of any denomination of christians from th language of a few obscure individuals who may cal themselves of that denomination; but from the writings of their current and esteemed authors. Fron such authors I propose making extracts, that it may be seen what the doctrine is which this work is intended to expunge. It should be remembered tha the doctrine of satisfaction is not confined to one denomination of christians; but is generally maintaine by the great body of those who, in modern times have taken upon them to monopolize to themselve the title of orthodox and evangelical: and I undertake to prove that the orthodoxy and evangelism o the New Testament stand opposed to such reputed orthodoxy and evangelism.

3. I totally disavow every thing invidious, all personal reflections, on the good men whose errors I think it my duty to expose. The integrity, zeal, and usefulness of the men I greatly respect; but, whatever respect we owe to men, we owe none to their mistakes. A blind veneration for celebrated names has retarded the progress of truth, and perpetuated the influence of the errors of former times. The opinions of the wisest and best of men ought not to be adopted implicitly; they ought to be brought to the test of scripture and reason, and nothing to be admitted as true but what will bear such a test.

That the reader may perceive the striking contrast which exists between the doctrine of satisfaction, or the popular notion of atonement, and what the oracles of God teach respecting the way of salvation and acceptance with God, he is presented in one column with extracts from reputed orthodox writers, in the other with passages of scripture. He may hence learn that modern christians speak in very different language, of the ground of a sinner's acceptance with God, from that used by the Prophets, Jesus, and his Apostles, when speaking on the same subject.

Extracts from reputed orthodox writers.

LUTHER (in his commentary on Gal. iii. 13.) says: 'Christ is innocent as concerning his own person, and therefore he ought not to have been hanged upon a tree: but because, according to the law of Moses, every thief and malefactor ought to be hanged, therefore Christ also, according to the law, ought to be hanged, for he sustained the person of a sinner and of a thief, not of one, but of all sinners and thieves.'

Again, he says: 'And this (no doubt) all the prophets did foresee in spirit, that Christ should become the greatest transgressor, murderer, thief, rebel, and blasphemer, that ever was or could be in all the world. For he being made a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, is not now an innocent person and without sins, is not now the Son of God born of the virgin mary; but a sinner.' Again, he says: 'When the law, therefore, found him among thieves it condemned and killed him as a thief.' Again, he represents God as saying to Christ: 'Be thou the person which hath committed the sins of all men: see,

Extracts from the sacred scriptures, with remarks.

Gen. xviii. 23, 25. 'Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?—That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: shall not the judge of all the earth do right?'

Exod. xxiii. 7. 'The innocent and righteous slay thou not.'

God's command to the Judges of Israel, Deut. xxv. 1. was that they should 'Justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.'

Job viii. 3. 'Doth God pervert judgment? or doth the Almighty pervert justice?' Chap. xxxiv. 12. 'Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.'

Prov. xvii. 15. 'He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord.'

Ezek. xviii. 20. 'The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.'

Heb. vii. 26. 'Such an high

therefore that thou pay and satisfy for them.' Then he adds: 'Here now cometh the law, and saith, I find him a sinner, and that such a one as hath taken upon him the sins of all men, and I see no sins else but in him; therefore let him die upon the cross: and so he setteth upon him and killeth him.'

priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.'

One of the thieves, who were crucified with Christ, said to his companion, Luke xxiii. 41. speaking of their condemnation: 'We indeed justly; but this man hath done nothing amiss.'

The roman centurion, when he saw the manner in which Christ suffered, and the circumstances which took place at the time, said, Chap. xxiii. 47. 'Certainly this was a righteous man.'

The Apostles testified to the Jews, Acts iii. 14. that they had 'denied the holy one and the just:' and Chap. vii. 52. the martyr Stephen told them that they had been his 'betrayers and murderers.'

Let the reader judge then whether Jesus died a guilty person and a sinner, as *Luther* has represented; or whether it was possible for him to die by the hand of justice and at the same time be murdered.

CALVIN, in his institutions, B. 2. C. 16. § 5. says: 'Now where it is demanded how Christ hath done away our sins, and taken away the strife between us and God, and purchased such righteousness as might *make him favorable and well-willing* towards us: it may be generally answered, that he hath brought it to pass by the whole course of his obedience.' Again, § 10. he

1. John, iv. 16. 'GOD IS LOVE.'

John iii. 16. 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.'

Eph. ii. 4, 5. 'God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ: by grace ye are saved.'

2 Cor. v. 18, 19. 'All things

hath these words: 'That in his soul he [Christ] suffered the torments of a damned and forsaken man.' Again, C. 15. § 6. he speaks of Christ's bearing the person of a priest: 'To make the Father favorable and merciful unto us.' Of God's 'appeasing himself through the blood of the cross.' § 4. He saith: 'That the burden of damnation, from which we were delivered, was laid upon Christ.' B. 3. C. 4. § 26. 'There is no other satisfaction by which God, being displeased, may be made favorable and appeased.'

are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.'

These passages show that nothing ever was necessary to be done to make God well-willing, favorable, and merciful to sinners, as *Calvin* supposed; for it appears that he always was so, without any external inducement.

'Christ died to reconcile the Father to us, and that he might be a true sacrifice for the guilt not only of original sin, but also for all the actual sins of men.'

Augsburg Confession.

'When we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.' Rom. v. 10.

This passage shows that it was not God, but men, who were reconciled by the death of Christ.

'God is not only supremely merciful, but supremely just. But his justice requires that our sins, being committed against his infinite majesty, must be punished not only with temporal, but with eternal pains, both of body and mind; which pains we

'For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.' Luke xxii. 33.

What was foretold concerning the sufferings of Christ had

cannot escape till the justice of God be satisfied. But when we could not make satisfaction, God gave his only begotten Son to satisfy for us: and he was made sin and a curse upon the cross in our stead.'

Synod of Dort.

'We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings.—Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine.'

'The offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone.'

Articles of the Church of England.

'Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth: not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins and accepting their persons as righteous: not for any thing wrought in them, or

its accomplishment, and terminated in a few hours: but how could eternal pains, both of body and mind, be endured, and brought to a termination, in the short space of a few hours?

'Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God. Ye see then how that by works, a man is justified, and not by faith only.' James ii. 21—24.

'Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that

done by them, but for Christ's sake alone: not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience, to them as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them.'

'Christ by his obedience, did fully discharge the debt, of all those who are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf.'

Confession of Faith of the Kirk of Scotland.

raised up Jesus our Lord the dead.' Rom. iv. 3, 2

'That the righteousne the law might be fulfilled who walk not after the fles after the spirit.' Chap. v

'For with the heart ma lieveth unto righteousne Chap. x. 10.

'Let no man deceive he that doeth righteousn righteous, even as he is ri ous.' 1 John iii. 7.

FLAVEL, in his Fountain of life opened, has the following passages. Quarto edit. p. 46. 'To wrath, to the wrath of an infinite God without mixture, to the very torments of hell, was Christ delivered, and that by the hand of his own Father.' P. 119. 'God stood upon full satisfaction, and would not remit one sin without it.' P. 129. 'It was necessary the sacrifice of Christ should be answerable to the debt we owed.' P. 132. 'The design and end of this oblation was to atone, pacify, and reconcile God by giving him a full and adequate compensation or sa-

'Exod. xxxiv. 5, 6, 7. the LORD descended i cloud, and stood with him t and proclaimed the name LORD. And the LORD sed by before him, and proc ed, the LORD, the LORD merciful and gracious, lor fering, and abundant in goo and truth, keeping merc thousands, forgiving iniq and transgression and sin.'

Is this the character of a who will not remit one sin out full satisfaction? Is th Father, who, with his own delivered up his most holy obedient child to the very

tisfaction for the sins of his elect.' P. 134. 'From this oblation Christ made of himself to God for our sins, we infer the *inflexible nature of divine justice, which could no other way be diverted from us and appeased, but by the blood of Christ.*' P. 135. 'Sparing mercy is the lowest degree of mercy, yet it was denied to Christ: he abated him not a minute of the time appointed for his sufferings, nor one degree of the wrath he had to bear.—Justice will not bend in the least; but, having to do with him on this account, resolves to fetch its pennyworths out of his blood.' P. 164. 'And Chrysostom to the same purpose; Christ paid much more (saith he) than we owed; and so much more as the immense ocean is more than a small drop.'—In the next page he tells us what Christ bought with this overprice 'All *temporal* good things, all *spiritual* good things, and all *eternal* good things.' P. 327. 'It is as if the Lord had said, Come forth of thy scabbard, O sword of justice! thou hast been hid there a long time, thou hast, as it were, been asleep in thy scabbard; now awake, and glitter; thou shalt drink royal blood; such as thou never sheddest be-

ments of Hell? Surely not, such a conduct would be utterly inconsistent with such a character.

2 Sam. xxii. 26, 27. 'With the merciful thou wilt show thyself merciful, with the upright man thou wilt show thyself upright, with the pure thou wilt show thyself pure.'

How can it be true then, that this Being would not show himself in the least merciful towards the merciful Jesus; that with the most upright and pure man that ever lived he would show himself only wrathful and vindictive?

Acts xvii. 25. 'He [God] giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.'

Eph. ii. 8. 'By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.'

Rom. vi. 23. 'The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.'

But if all temporal good things, all spiritual good things, and all eternal good things, be freely given by God, how can it be true that Christ bought all these things for us, and paid their full price, and that justice would not suffer us to be saved unless it 'Fetched its pennyworths out of his blood?'

fore.' P. 338. 'Here is the triumph of divine justice, and the highest triumph that ever it had; to single forth the chief shepherd—the *man* that is *God's fellow*—and sheath its sword in his breast for satisfaction.' P. 419. 'His soul felt the *wrath of an angry God*, which was terribly impressed upon it.—As the wrath, the pure unmixed wrath of God, lay upon his soul, so *all the wrath of God* was poured out upon him even to the last drop.' P. 417. 'As it was all the wrath of God that lay upon Christ, so *it was his wrath aggravated* in the divers respects, beyond that which the damned themselves do suffer.' In p. 82, he talks of the blood of Christ being 'in itself sufficient to stop the course of God's justice, and render him not only placable, but abundantly satisfied.' And, P. 133. 'Of all the three persons in the divine essence being reconciled by the expiation of sin.' P. 159. he says: 'If Christ, by dying, hath made full satisfaction, then *God was no loser in pardoning the greatest of sinners that believe in Jesus.*'

Mal. iii. 6. 'I am the LORD, I change not.'

James i. 17. 'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.'

Isa. xxvii. 4. 'Fury is not in me.'

Zeph. iii. 17. 'He will rest in his love.'

How is it possible, according to these passages, that the Almighty should become an angry God, and lay his wrath upon an innocent person? How is it possible he should be capable of being appeased and reconciled, seeing these things imply a change, wherever they take place; but no change can be possible in an unchangeable Being?

Mat. iii. 17. 'This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.'

John viii. 9. 'The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.'

If Christ always pleased God, how could he be the object of his displeasure, and have all his wrath directed against him?'

ISAAC AMBROSE, in his Looking unto Jesus, Edinburgh edit. represents Christ as saying to his Father, p. 308. 'O my Father, sith thou hast bent thy bow, lo here an open breast: fix herein all thy shafts of fury. —Come and shoot here thine arrows of revenge.' Again, he says, p. 313. 'We find God the Father imposing, and Christ submitting to this satisfaction.' Again, p. 314. 'Not the sins themselves, not the evil in them, or fault of them, but the guilt and penalty belonging to them; this God laid upon his son, and charged it upon him: he charged it as a creditor chargeth the debt upon the surety, requiring satisfaction.' Again, p. 268. he says: 'God the Father is here brought in as drawing and whetting his sword, and calling upon it to do execution against Jesus Christ. —God the Father had a hand in his sufferings.—It was not a naked permission, but a positive decree.—The plot was long since drawn, and lay hid in God's bosom till he was pleased (by the actions of men) to copy it out and to give the world a draught of it.—God spent his eternal thoughts about it.'

Heb. v. 7. Christ 'in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.

Mark. xiv. 35, 36. 'And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt.'

Thus did Jesus pray; but he did not address his Father as if he thought him angry and vindictive; he dropt no hint of God's venting his fury and revenge upon him.

Phil. ii. 8. Christ 'became obedient to death, even the death of the cross.'

Heb. xii. 2. 'For the joy that was set before him [he] endured the cross, despising the shame.'

Acts ii. 23. 'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.'

Such is the light in which the death of Christ is represented in the New Testament, not as

a plot which God had drawn, and spent his eternal thoughts about and which was to be copied out by the wicked actions of men but as the most perfect act of obedience to the divine will, on the part of Christ, in his suffering so unjust and cruel a death without resistance or complaint; and as a most cruel and wicked murder on the part of the Jews.

BAXTER, in his book on universal Redemption, says, p. 50. 'Christ did give his satisfaction directly and strictly not to man, for whom he suffered, but to God whom he satisfied.' Again, p. 56. 'The rector or creditor must first receive the satisfaction, before a discharge can be offered to the offender or debtor, on consideration of that satisfaction made and accepted.' Again, p. 60. 'Christ's death is a sufficient price and satisfaction to God for the sins of all mankind.' Yet this good man supposed that though Christ had made satisfaction for *all*, many would suffer everlastingly: for he says, p. 44. 'The consciences of the damned in hell, (which will be God's executioners) will everlastingly torment them for refusing that pardon and salvation that was so dearly purchased for them.'

Luke vii. 41, 42. 'There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both.'

Such was our Lord's method of illustrating his doctrine: and certainly it teaches nothing about God's standing on compleat satisfaction before a discharge could be offered to the offender.

And he said, Luke vi. 37. 'Forgive and ye shall be forgiven. And, Matt. vi. 14. 'If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will forgive you.'

But surely we are not to stand upon full satisfaction before we forgive a debt, or trespass.

BISHOP BEVERIDGE, in his Private thoughts upon religion, fifth edit. speaking of the death of Christ, p. 44, says: 'I believe it was not only as much, but infinitely more satisfactory to divine justice, than though I should have died to eternity: for by that means justice is actually and perfectly satisfied already.' In the next page he says: 'I may not only cry, *mercy, mercy, O gracious Father*; but *justice, justice, my righteous God!* I may not only say, Lord, be gracious and merciful, but be just and faithful, to acquit me from that debt, and cancel that bond which my surety hath paid for me.'

In the Practice of piety, fifty-ninth edit. p. 405, the sinner is described as asking: 'Lord why didst thou pray with such strong crying and tears?' And Christ as replying: 'That I might quench the fury of God's justice, which was so fiercely kindled against thee.'

Lam. iii. 22, 23, 32, 33. 'It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.—Though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men.'

Micah vii. 18. 'Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.'

Psa. cxlvii. 11. 'The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, and those that hope in his mercy.'

Tit. iii. 5. 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.'

From these passages it appears that the ground of a sinner's hope is the mercy of God; and that all the blessings we receive flow from the divine mercy.'

BUNYAN, in his book called **The doctrine of the Law and**

John i. 17. 'Grace and truth **came by Jesus Christ.**'

Grace unfolded, p. 88, speaking of the favor of God, says: 'That it comes by way of covenant, contract, or bargain.' P. 90. That 'this covenant or bargain was made indeed and in truth, before man was in being.' P. 101. That God and Christ both bound themselves by an oath to fulfil each his part of the agreement. P. 102. That Christ was 'at the bargain making:' and that he engaged on his part 'That there should be a *compleat* satisfaction given to God for the sins of the world.' P. 104. he says: 'God's law did so seize upon the Lord Jesus, and so cruelly handle him, and so exact upon him, that it would never let him alone, until it had accused him, and condemned him, executed him, and screwed his very heart's blood out of his precious heart and side.' Again, p. 113. 'When Jesus Christ did come to make himself a sacrifice, or to offer himself for sin, you may understand that our sins were indeed charged to purpose upon him.' Again: 'His death was not a natural death, but a cursed death, even such a one as men do undergo from God for their sins (though he himself had none) even such a death, as to

Acts iv. 33. 'Great was upon them all.'

Rom. iii. 24. 'Being ed freely by his grace.'

Chap. iv. 16. 'It is of that it might be by grace.

Chap. v. 2. 'We have by faith into this grace w we stand.'

Chap. v. 15. 'For if th the offence of one many b much more the grace of and the gift by grace, b man, Jesus Christ hath ab ed unto many.'

Ver. 17. 'They whic ceive abundance of grac of the gift of righteousnes reign in life by one, Jesus C

Ver. 20. 'Where sin ab ed, grace did much m bound.'

1 Cor. xv. 10. 'By the of God I am what I am.'

Eph. i. 3, 6, 7. 'Bless the God and Father of ou Jesus Christ, who hath b us with all spiritual blessi heavenly places in Christ the praise of the glory grace, wherein he hath m accepted in the beloved whom we have reden through his blood, the fo ness of sins, according t riches of his [God's] grac

2 Thess. ii. 16. 'God,

endure the very pains and torments of hell,' Again, p. 116. 'The sins for which he suffered, called for the torments of hell; the condition in which he died, did call for the torments of hell; for Christ did not die the death of a saint, but the death of a sinner; of a cursed and damned sinner (because he stood in their rooms) the law to which he was subjected, called for the torments of hell; the nature of God's justice could not bate him any thing, the death which he was to suffer, had not lost its sting; all these being put together, do irresistibly declare unto us, that he as a sacrifice, did suffer the torments of hell.'

our Father, which hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace.'

C. xx. 24. 'The ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God.'

1. Cor. i. 4. 'I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ.'

Tit. ii. 2. 'The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.'

2 Cor. ix. 15. 'Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.'

These passages with many more, which might be quoted, show that all the blessings made known by Christ, and communicated by the gospel, are of the grace of God, i. e. his free favor; than which nothing can be more contrary to the notion of their coming to us by 'way of contract or bargain.' Every idea of God's bargaining to dispense his favors at a certain price destroys the idea of free grace.

STOCKELL, in his book called 'The redeemer's glory

Mr. Stockell speaks fairly out, he admits the natural

unveiled says, p. 157. 158. 'In a strict and proper sense, the infinite God doth not *forgive* sin; for it is readily granted by all who are *sound in the faith*, that Jesus Christ hath given full satisfaction to divine justice for all sin, and hath fully paid the debts of his church.—And if Christ hath satisfied the justice of God, for all the sins of his people, how, then, can it justly, or with propriety of speech, be said, that God pardoneth our sins and transgressions? Sure I am, that debt can never be *forgiven* which is *paid*. For instance, suppose I owe a man a thoussand pounds, and he should demand this debt, I must *pay*, or go to jail; my *adversary* is about to *deliver me to the officer*, that I may be *cast into prison*. I acknowledge, that the whole of this proceeding is just; but in the interim, a third person interposes, who formerly loved me, and demonstrates he still loves me, in engaging to pay my debt: *I love him*, saith he, *he shall not go to jail; I will pay the debt. Here I give my bond for the payment*. Tell me, now, did my creditor *forgive* me my debt? I am certain every wise man will answer consequence of the doctrine of satisfaction, i. e. that it destroys the idea of Gods forgiving sins; but that the doctrine of the free forgiveness of sins is plainly taught in the Scriptures may be seen from the following passages.

2 Chron. vii. 14. 'If my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin.'

Psalm xxxii. 1. 'Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven.'

lxxxvi. 5. 'For thou, LORD art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.'

ciii. 2. 3. 'Bless the LORD O my soul and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities.'

cxxx. 3. 4. 'If thou LORD shouldest mark iniquities, O LORD who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.'

Nehem. ix. 17. 'Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness.'

Isa. xxxiii. 24. 'The people

in the negative. This then is the true state of the case in hand.—Absolute justice was ready to apprehend us, and commit us to the *everlasting prison of darkness* for our iniquities: but our glorious *head* and *husband*, Jesus Christ, who had *loved us* in our supralapsarian state, as his *bride* and spouse, did, as our husband, lay himself under an obligation to pay our debt, he became our sponsor or surety, and gave (to speak after the manner of men) a bond for our debt; for all was placed to his account; and he did, at the time appointed by the Father, dip his pen in his own *blood*, and *cross the black lines* of all our sins, by which he made to God a full payment of our debt. Tell me, now, were my sins *forgiven* me in a strict and proper sense? This must also be answered in the negative.'

Mr. BRINE, in his answer to *Dr. James Foster*, says, p. 243, 'The blessed Jesus was our surety, and paid our debt; his payment is reckoned to us.—Nor is there any thing absurd in this, more than a creditor's imputing to a debtor the payment of a debt by a surety.'

that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.'

C. xl. 2. 'Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned.'

C. lv. 7. 'Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.'

Jer. xxxi. 34 'I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.'

C. xxxiii. 8. 'I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.'

C. xxxvi. 3. 'It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them, that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.'

Dan. ix. 9. 'To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him.'

Matt. xii. 31. 'All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men.'

Luke xxiii. 34. 'Father,

rety, and thereupon esteeming him no longer a debtor to himself,' Again, speaking of what the Jews did to Christ, he says, p. 332. 'He [God] decreed that those very persons should be the actors of this vile tragedy, who acted therein, and not others.'

DR. WATTS, in his hymns and poems, has the following passages:

'How Justice frown'd, and vengeance stood,
To drive me down to endless pain!
But the great son propos'd his blood,
And heav'nly wrath grew mild again.'

'Well, the redeemer's gone
T'appear before our God,
To sprinkle o'er the flaming throne
With his atoning blood.'

'Once 'twas a seat of dreadful wrath,
And shot devouring flame;
Our God appear'd consuming fire,
And vengeance was his name.'

'Rich were the drops of Jesus' blood,
That calm'd his frowning face,
That sprinkled o'er the burning throne,
And turn'd the wrath to grace.'

'Justice was pleas'd to bruise the God,
And pay its wrongs with heavenly blood.'

'Is there no shelter from the eye
Of a revenging God,
JESUS, to thy dear wounds I fly,
Bedew me with thy blood.'

forgive them; for they not what they do.'

Acts v. 31. 'Him [C hath God exalted with hi hand to be a Prince and a our, for to give repentanc Israel, and forgiveness of

C. xiii. 38. 'Th this man is preached unt the forgiveness of sins.'

C. xxvi. 18. 'To oper eyes,—that they may r forgiveness of sins.'

Rom. iv. 7. 'Blesse they whose iniquities are ven.'

Col. ii. 13. 'And yo ing dead in your sins a uncircumcision of your hath he quickened to with him, having forgive all trespasses.'

1 John i. 9. 'If we c our sins, he is faithful an to forgive us our sins.'

C. ii. 12. 'I write unt little children, because yo are forgiven you for his n sake.'

'Pardon, and grace, and boundless [love,
Streaming along a SAVIOUR'S [blood,
And life, and joys, and crowns above,
Dear-purchas'd by a bleeding GOD.'

'Did Pity ever stoop so low,
Dress'd in Divinity and blood?
Was ever Rebel courted so
In groans of an expiring GOD?'

MR. DAN TAYLOR, in his Fundamentals of Religion, first edit. has the following passages: P. 169. 'By atonement is meant in general, something performed or suffered, or both, in order to appease an offended party.' P. 170. Speaking of God's punishing transgressors, he says: 'If this punishment fall upon us, we are treated in a manner similar to that in which the flaming passion we call wrath would naturally prompt us to treat an offender.' P. 173. After speaking of Christ's dying for us he asks: 'Is it not evident then, that he died to *atone* or *appease* the divine anger?' P. 175. 'It is well known that a *propitiation* signifies an appeasement of anger in order to expiate offences, and obtain pardon for the offender.' It is evident, *that Mr. Taylor, in these pas-*

That God can act on the ground of mercy, without requiring a satisfaction, and that he hath more pleasure in exercising his mercy freely, and in the obedience of his creatures, than in bleeding sacrifices, is evident from the following passages.

1 Sam. xv. 22. 'Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.'

Psa. li. 16, 17. 'For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.'

Isa. i. 11, 16, 17, 18, 'To what purpose is the multi-

sages, maintains the same sentiment as others contend for under the name of satisfaction: and as he maintains the universality of the death of Christ, and of his atonement. he must be considered as maintaining that Christ has made satisfaction to divine justice for, or by his death expiated the sins of, all mankind: yet he supposes divine justice will be eternally pursuing those who do not believe and obey in the present state: for he says, p. 343. ‘ In these torments must the ungodly *for ever* dwell, soul and body eternally filled with anguish. I say *eternally*, for this fire is everlasting. Ages, thousands and millions of ages shall not bring its burning to a period. Millions of ages can bear no comparison to the duration of a lost sinner's anguish. When the largest number of ages to which the thought of man can extend, are revolved, this torment will only be beginning.’

tude of your sacrifices
me ? saith the LORD :
full of the burnt offerin
rams, and the fat of fed b
and I delight not in the
of bullocks, or of lambs,
he-goats.—Wash you,
you clean; put away the
of your doings from before
eyes; cease to do evil;
to do well; seek judgmen
lieve the oppressed, judg
fatherless, plead for the w
Come now, and let us r
together, saith the LO
though your sins be as sc
they shall be white as s
though they be red like
son, they shall be as wool.

Hos. vi. 6. ‘ For I d
mercy, and not sacrifice;
the knowledge of God
than burnt offerings.’

Mic. vi. 6, 7, 8, ‘ W
with shall I come befor
LORD, and bow myself b
the high God ? shall I
before him with burnt offe
with calves of a year old ?
the LORD be pleased
thousands of rams, or wit
thousands of rivers of oil ?
I give my firstborn for my t
gression, the fruit of my
for the sin of my soul ?
hath showed thee, O man,
is good; and what doth

LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?'

Matt. ix. 13. 'Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.'

Pro. xxviii. 13. 'He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.'

BISHOP BEVERIDGE, in his sermons, vol. 10. p. 202. speaking of Christ, says, 'And unless he mediate or intercede for us, we may pray our hearts out, all will signify nothing, GOD will neither grant what we desire, nor accept of any thing we do.' Again, p. 244. 'And, verily, it is well for us, that we have such a Mediator and Advocate, who is able to make up all differences, to reconcile Almighty GOD our maker to us, and to prevail with him to accept of any thing that we do.'*

'I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you.'—John xvi. 26, 27.

Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.'

'Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he who feareth him. and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. —Acts x. 4, 34, 35.

'The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.'—Rom. x. 12.

* Mr. JERRAM admits 'that some writers may have expressed themselves on this subject in terms that cannot be justified;' (Letters on Atonement p. 14)

The preceding extracts, from reputed orthodc writers, of celebrity, sufficiently explain what meant by the doctrine of satisfaction, or popul doctrine of atonement; they show the light which it hath been maintained for several ages: t import of them may be thus summarily state 1. Our sins made God angry, wrathful and vindi tive; and, such is the nature of his justice, it w impossible for him to lay aside his wrath, and b come placable, well-willing, favorable and mercif to his creatures, until an innocent and holy pers had borne the whole weight of his indignation a fury, and so satisfied divine justice on their beha 2. That Christ became the substitute of sinne and, standing in their place, had all their sins imp ted to him, and set up to his account; that he becar responsible for them, and had the whole weight their guilt and punishment laid upon him: that, t being the case, the wrath of God was turned fro the sinner, and poured out upon Christ: that justi could make no abatement, but exacted of the su stitute all that the sinner owed, and inflicted on hi the very torments of the damned in hell, to the l degree: that, consequently, Christ became a sinn by imputation, and died the death, not of a right ous person, but of a sinner. 3. That Christ, by e

but surely he will not apply this remark to all the writers quoted above, and so rash as to charge the zealous advocates for what he deems an essential trine of the gospel, from the time of the reformation to the present day, with pressing it 'in terms that cannot be justified.' Yet he must either do this or quit me of unfairness in the representation I have given of the subject.

during all the wrath of God, hath appeased, reconciled, and rendered him placable, well-willing, favorable and merciful to sinners. 4. That all the blessings of grace and salvation come to us on the ground of a contract, bargain, or agreement, made between the Father and the Son on behalf of sinners; the conditions of which bargain, or agreement, Christ hath made good, on his part, by suffering the vengeance of God due to the actual transgressors. 5. That strictly speaking, God does not forgive sins; but cancels them because Christ has made full satisfaction for them; as a creditor cancels a debt when he has received full payment: that the blessings which God bestows on sinners are not dispensed by him as absolute free gifts; but that Christ paid a price for them to divine justice. 6. That sinners have not only encouragement to pray for blessings, on the ground of the divine mercy; but a right to require them, on the ground of justice; Christ having made good, on their behalf, his part of the bargain, or agreement, which secures all blessings to them. Such is the doctrine opposed in this volume.

The reader may hence judge of the point at issue. The question is not whether Christ be the messenger of divine grace and mercy to men; nor whether God hath constituted him the medium by which all the blessings of salvation come to sinners; nor whether the suffering and death, as well as the teaching and resurrection of Jesus, had for their object the salvation of mankind; nor whether Christ died for us, for

our sins, in the sense in which such phrases are us in the New Testament; nor whether there be a other name given among men whereby we can be s ved; all these things are fully admitted; but t question is whether the doctrine of atonement, satisfaction be true, as stated above: and it is appr hended that, however some, in the present day, m refine upon the notion of vicarious sufferings and o dience, such a doctrine must, on the whole, lead the same conclusions as the foregoing extracts plain express.

It is presumed that the extracts from scripture, i the opposite columns, must convince the unbiasse enquirer after truth, that the notion of Christ's m king satisfaction for the sins of men is contrary t the letter, as well as the spirit of divine revelation.- The scriptures clearly teach that God is love; that h is merciful and gracious; that he is unchangeabl that he will not condemn and punish the guiltles that Christ was always the object of his love and goo pleasure; that he died a just and holy person; tha God forgives sins freely, on the ground of his ric mercy, and bestows all blessings freely. Hence, i is presumed, that it is not affirming too much, to say that the doctrine of satisfaction is refuted by the ex press language of scripture. Certain it is that suc language as the advocates for that doctrine have ev held can be no where found in the sacred writing and that the words of the sacred penmen must b strangely twisted to be brought into any seemin agreement with so strange an hypothesis.

CHAPTER SECOND.

The Doctrine of satisfaction refuted by argument.

REAL evidence must ever be on the side of truth. Error and falsehood may have seeming evidence. It is by subjecting both to the scrutiny of reason, that the reality of the former will be perceived, and the fallacy of the latter detected. While things remain unexamined, and men take for granted that those particular notions, which are termed orthodox, are certainly true and of the first importance, it is not to be wondered that they suppose such notions to be built on scripture, and supported by the most decisive proof; and that they think the opposite doctrines unscriptural and destitute of any real evidence. The reader is not required to relinquish what he has hitherto thought a doctrine of divine truth, or to receive as true what he has been taught to regard as a dangerous error, without the most serious and careful examination, nor on any ground but such evidence as carries full conviction to his mind; but he is requested to do justice to himself and the subject, by giving it a candid and impartial examination. Let the advice of an Apostle be regarded: 'Prove all things.' Truth cannot suffer by the closest scrutiny, it has nothing to fear from examination and exposure; its native excellence and convincing evidence will become the more

manifest. Our opponents should consider when they shrink from examination, by persuading others that it is dangerous to attend to the arguments we advance, that they are betraying the weakness of their own cause, and tacitly admitting that they dare not submit it to the ordeal of a rational investigation. Such a method may preserve men of weak and timid minds attached to the cause of reputed orthodoxy; but firm and vigorous souls, inspired with the ardent love of truth, will become the more anxious to examine what is said by both parties. It is not uncommon for persons who espouse the doctrine I oppose, to cry out against our arguments as carnal reasoning, to give us credit for uncommon abilities, and to insinuate that it is dangerous for plain illiterate persons to put themselves in the way of, what they call, our sophisms. This we think ungenerous. We know not why our reasonings should be called carnal any more than theirs. They reason as well as we: and, whatever outcry may sometimes be made against reason, they certainly are glad of reason as an auxiliary so far as it is favorable to their cause. We suppose their reasonings are merely human, those of fallible creatures, as well as ours. We think no reasoning ought to be called carnal, unless it evidently flows from some sensual principle, or be prostituted to mere sensual purposes. Supposing we possessed the ability in arguing with which we have sometimes been complimented, it would not follow that we were the more likely to deceive others; unless it could be proved that superior ability involves

dishonesty. If we impose on others by substituting sophistry for sober argument we lie open to detection: our opponents are numerous, and many of them men of parts and learning, let them detect our supposed sophisms, and disabuse the unlearned reader; but it must be done by something more than merely raising an outcry against us. The arguments I am about to state, I trust, will be found perfectly adapted to the common reader.

I am aware that some sincere christians will feel shocked at the idea of arguments being constructed against a doctrine which they have ever held most sacred, and esteemed the ground of their hope as sinners. It will not surprise me if such persons should load me with censures, and consider the present attempt as aimed at the foundation of the gospel. I would say to them '*strike, but hear.*' I am willing to bear all their reproaches if they will but seriously examine the arguments.

1. Those who maintain the doctrine of satisfaction, contradict themselves, and one part of their system destroys the other; for they suppose that all the blessings of grace and salvation originated in the love of God to man; yet that God was become wrathful, and either would not or could not save sinners, and receive them to his favor, unless Christ first appeased his wrath by bearing the punishment due to them for their sins. Now, if God loved a guilty world so greatly as to give his Son to save them, if all the blessings of grace and salvation flow from *his* pure love to sinners, it must follow that he

was nor wrath with them, however much he might disapprove of their conduct; for love and wrath cannot subsist, at the same time, in the same mind. If sinners are saved, and restored to the divine favor, because Christ has appeased the wrath of God, satisfied his justice, reconciled him, made him 'well-willing' towards his creatures, it follows that Christ is the cause rather than the effect of God's love, and that the blessings of grace and salvation flow from what Christ hath done rather than from the pure love of the Deity. One part of this contradictory system must be false, nor need we be at a loss to tell which; for we read (John iii. 16.) that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son: and that all the blessings of the gospel flow from the great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins. Ephe. ii. 4, 5. Again, they profess the doctrine of free grace, that sinners are saved by the grace of God, and that the gospel is throughout a system of free grace; yet they represent salvation, and the divine favor, as coming to us by a kind of bargain between the Father and Son; that Christ gave God a consideration for them, that he bought and paid for our redemption, which places the subject before us in the light of a bargain, of sale, purchase, and delivery, rather than that of a system of free favor. They talk of Christ's having merited our salvation for us, and that we are saved on the ground of his mirits, and yet that we are saved by the free grace of God: which seems a flat contradiction; for what is merited, and bestowed on the ground of me-

rit, it matters not whether that of the sinner or of his substitute, can never be a free gift. If we will act rationally we must either give up the doctrine of free grace, or the notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sins, of his having bought and paid, literally, for our redemption. Again, they talk of the mercy of God to sinners; yet they contend that God shews no mercy but on the ground of full satisfaction made to his justice, which would supercede the need of mercy, and, in fact, leave no place for it; for after justice had received all it could demand, and inflicted all the punishment due to the offender, it would be an act of mere justice to liberate him, nor could he justly be detained as a criminal. Again, they generally profess to maintain the free forgiveness of sins, though in this they are opposed by a writer on their own side;* yet they will have it that God never cancels our debts but on the ground of their being all fully paid by Christ, as our substitute; in which case the discharge of the sinner would be purely legal; as when a debt is fully paid there can be nothing to forgive. In this dilemma what is to be done? It seems, either the doctrine of divine mercy and free forgiveness must be given up, or the notion of satisfaction must be renounced, or we must believe manifest contradictions. I am aware our opponents will not admit the propriety of this reasoning, they will perhaps cry out against it as a daring attack upon a doctrine

* See the preceding Chap.

long held sacred by many learned and pious men; but I appeal to the candid and impartial whether it be not just and rational, and leave others to extricate themselves, in the best manner they can, from the dilemmas in which their own system involves them.

2. The notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sins, and that sinners are saved on the ground of his satisfaction, involves ideas which are contrary to the nature of things; for it supposes sin, guilt, and punishment, innocence, and righteousness to be transferable: that our sins, guilt, and punishment were transferred to Christ; and that his innocency, and righteousness are transferred to us. But the nature of these things must change before they can become transferable.

Sin is the transgression of some law; it is the act of an intelligent being; it cannot, in any sense, become the act of him who never participated in it; it cannot, consistently with either truth or justice, be imputed to a person who is perfectly innocent. To impute sin is to charge crimes upon a person; to charge crimes upon one who is innocent, is to fix a false charge on him, and is contrary to every known law and principle of justice. God himself hath protested against it, by saying, (Ezek. xviii. 20.) 'The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.' This prohibits the idea of the wickedness of the wicked, being imputed, or transferred, to an innocent person, and of the righteousness of a

righteous person being transferred, or set up to the account of the sinner. It follows that our sins could not be transferred or imputed to Christ.

Guilt is the consciousness of having sinned. It can attach to none but the actual transgressor. An innocent person can never be conscious of having sinned. To be conscious that others have sinned, and are guilty, fixes no guilt on an innocent man. Guilt must be personal or it cannot exist; for conscious innocence precludes the possibility of feeling guilt, and a man must sin before he can become the subject of guilt. To impute guilt is to charge a man with being guilty: and the charge must be either true or false. If the person to whom guilt is imputed, i. e. said to belong, be really culpable the imputation is just; but if he be innocent the imputation is unjust and false; and, if the person who imputes it be acquainted with his innocence, such imputation is universally held to be base and infamous. This is the case among men: and shall we ascribe to God a proceeding which would stamp infamy on the character of a mortal. To say the person to whom the guilt is imputed is willing it should be so, by no means removes the difficulty; for his agreeing to it does not make the imputation the less false, nor the less unjust in itself: he is innocent and he cannot be reckoned guilty, consistently with truth and justice.

Punishment is any kind of penalty, pain, or suffering inflicted on a transgressor. For it to be just

he on whom it is inflicted must be really criminal. Pain and suffering, simply in themselves, are not punishment; they take the name of punishment only when inflicted for some crime. An innocent person may suffer; but it cannot with propriety be said he is punished. The word punishment implies criminality in the person on whom it is inflicted. Punishment, in criminal cases, cannot be transferred from the guilty to the innocent, without departing from the approved rules, and defeating the ends of punitive justice. Punishment must be intended either to secure or destroy the person of the offender that he may not repeat his crime, or to reform him, or to make reparation to society, or to deter others by what he suffers from committing similar crimes, or for several of these ends combined; but none of these ends could be secured by an innocent person suffering in the place and stead of the guilty. Such vicarious sufferings would leave the real criminal at liberty to repeat his crime if he pleased; it would not be likely to reform him, as he would escape with impunity; the slaying the innocent, in the place and stead of the guilty, could be no reparation to society; nor would it be likely to deter others from similar acts of criminality. The established connexion between crime and punishment must be dissolved before punishment can become transferable. If an innocent person should show himself ready to die in the place and stead of a criminal, the infliction of death on him would be execrated, and surely a

deed so execrable is not to be ascribed to the divine government.

The doctrine of satisfaction also supposes innocence and righteousness to be transferable. Innocence stands opposed to guilt. It must be personal, or it cannot exist. To impute innocence to a guilty man is a false imputation. The innocency of one man cannot, in the nature of things, constitute another, who is guilty, innocent; but the doctrine I am opposing supposes God to account the sinner innocent, or just, on the ground of his sin and guilt having been imputed to, and his punishment having been borne by Christ. Under this view it supposes an impossibility; for God cannot view any person or thing otherwise than it is; to suppose the contrary is to suppose him capable of viewing things in a false light, which is impossible: he cannot view a guilty person otherwise than guilty, nor an innocent person otherwise than innocent. Righteousness consists in right dispositions and actions; 'He who doeth righteousness is righteous.' Righteousness must be personal, or it cannot exist. It cannot be transferred from one man to another. To impute the right dispositions and actions of one person to another is a false imputation, and leaves the person to whom righteousness is merely so imputed as much an unrighteous man as he was before. The supposed satisfaction of Christ would not be thought, by its advocates, to answer the purpose, if on the ground his righteousness were not transferred, or imputed to the unrighteous person; but this latter is im-

possible, consequently the doctrine itself is a mere nullity.

3. Neither Christ nor his Apostles taught the doctrine of satisfaction, nor even hinted at it, not even on those occasions when it was most to be expected, if a doctrine of truth. Those who contend for the popular notion of atonement suppose that those who reject it must die in their sins; for they make it a fundamental article of christian faith; but when Jesus told the Jews that except they believed that he was the Christ they would die in their sins, he added not a word about the necessity of their believing that he must die in the place and stead of sinners to atone the wrath of God, in order to their being saved: he left them totally in the dark about this supposed fundamental doctrine of the gospel. In his sermon on the mount he said not a word about it; though at the conclusion of that sermon he describes the man who builds on a good foundation, he gives not the least hint of his vicarious sacrifice being the foundation; but declares that the man who heareth his sayings and doeth them is the wise builder. When he described the character of those who shall enter the heavenly kingdom, he said nothing about their believing his death to be satisfaction for their sins; but makes the only qualification their doing the will of God. At a time when his disciples did not believe it was necessary he should die, he declared to Peter that he had confessed the truth upon which the church should be built; though Peter had only confessed that Jesus, the Son of man, was the Christ

the Son of the living God. (See Matt. 16 Chap.) It seems then our Lord did not make the notion of his death being vicarious an article of christian faith. Had the death of Christ been necessary to make satisfaction for the sins of men, it is reasonable to expect he would have told his disciples so, at the time when he was laboring to convince them of the necessity of his dying by the hands of wicked men; but, though he mentioned several other reasons why he must suffer, he said not one word of what is thought by many christians most of all to render his death necessary: he gave not the slightest hint that unless he died to satisfy divine justice, they could not be saved. How can it be supposed, had the notion of satisfaction been true, he would have been silent on the subject at such a time. After his resurrection, when shewing how it behoved him to suffer, not a hint is given of his saying a word about vindictive justice, of his having appeased the wrath of God, or made satisfaction, or any thing of the kind. When he commissioned his Apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he gave no intimation of this being on the ground of his having purchased salvation for mankind. The total silence of Christ on the subject, throughout the whole of his ministry, when he was about to suffer, and after his resurrection, even on those occasions when, if the doctrine were true, it would have been natural for him to have introduced it, seems no weak argument against the popular notion *of atonement.*

According to the history given of the apostles' ministry, in the *book of Acts*, and their discourses recorded there, the Apostles preserved the same silence respecting Christ's having made satisfaction for sins, as he had done before them. The advocates for this notion think it necessary, when preaching to unconverted sinners, to say a great deal about the vindictive justice of God, and the utter impossibility of his saving them on any ground but the complete satisfaction, or atonement, made by Christ to divine justice for all their sins. Had the apostles entertained the same views, it is reasonable to suppose, they would have insisted on the same points, when preaching to unconverted sinners; yet we do not find that they said one word either about vindictive justice, or satisfaction for sin. The silence of the apostles, added to that of their master, respecting the doctrine of satisfaction, is a proof that it is not a doctrine of the gospel; for we can know of no doctrines of the gospel but what Jesus and his Apostles taught.

4. Satisfaction demanded implies injury received by him who demands it, and a capability of receiving compensation; but God is no more capable of receiving injury than he is of doing injury, or than he is of receiving benefit. Job xxxv. 6, 7, 8. 'If thou sinnest, what doest thou against him? or if thy transgression be multiplied, what doest thou unto him? If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand? Thy wickedness may hurt a man as thou art, and thy

righteousness may profit the son of man.' Chap. xxii. 2, 3. 'Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself?—Is it gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect?' Psa. xvi. 2, 3. 'O my soul, thou hast said unto the LORD, thou art my LORD; my goodness extendeth not unto thee: but to the saints that are in the earth.' As God is absolutely independent, above all influence, incapable of sustaining injury, or receiving benefit, from any one, it is impossible he should demand and receive satisfaction, or an equivalent for his favor to sinners.

But it is argued that, though he cannot be personally injured, his justice was injured, and that it was his justice required satisfaction: this affects not the argument; for what is his justice separate from him whose justice it is. Can justice, viewed abstractedly, be a person capable of acting and suffering, of receiving injury and compensation? The justice of any being is the rectitude of his conduct, the equity of his ways; and. surely, the rectitude of the divine conduct was not diminished, nor the equity of God's ways interrupted, by the evil actions of his creatures. Justice can neither demand, nor receive, any thing, but as some one demands and receives it in the name of justice; therefore to say that the justice of God demanded and received satisfaction is, in effect, the same thing as saying God himself demanded and received satisfaction. Sin is nowhere but in the creature, all its effects are reflected to the creature, and all the injury done by it

is done to the creature; consequently, it is in the creature that reparation for the evil produced by sin is required: and this reparation can only be made by the restoration of the sinner to purity and happiness: in other words, by the removal of the evil from those who are the subjects of it: this is effected, not by an innocent person suffering in their place and stead, but by their reformation and recovery to the paths of rectitude.

It may be said, though God is not injured by our sins, yet the good of the moral system is, the interests of our fellow creatures are; and consequently satisfaction was necessary. To this I reply, whatever injury had been done to the moral system it could not be repaired by the cruel murder of an innocent person, which is spoken of in the New Testament as a gross violation of moral principle: there seems no way of repairing the injury done to the moral system, but by the reformation and future good conduct of those who have done it. However the interests of creatures may be injured by sin, it is not possible to compensate that injury by any thing but the amendment, and future right actions of those who have been injurious.

5. The notion of Christ's atoning the wrath of God, and reconciling him to sinners, is a contradiction to the divine immutability. If God be unchangeable, in one mind and none can turn him, the same from everlasting to everlasting, without variableness, or the least shadow of turning, how can it be true that our sins filled him with wrath and vin-

dictive fury; and that Christ. by his death, appeased that wrath, or removed it, or 'turned it to grace?' If God, who is essentially love, became a God of wrath, in consequence of the sin of his creatures, this was one change; if, in consequence of the sufferings and satisfaction of Christ, he ceased to be a God of wrath, this was another change; and if, after all, wrath will be again kindled in him, and eternally burn against millions of his creatures, here will be still another change. But how can any change take place in an unchangeable being? and how can the doctrine which supposeth such changes be true? If you see a man wrathful and vindictive, and you appease his wrath and remove his vindictiveness, you effect a change in his mind; and, if you say Christ did the same thing with respect to God, you in fact say that he changed the mind of God. If you know a man who is at variance with another, and you reconcile him to the person with whom he is at variance, you evidently effect a change in him towards that person; so, if Christ reconciled God to the world, he must evidently have effected a change in him in favor of mankind. Reconciliation cannot take place without a change, under some view or other, taking place in the party who is reconciled. Christ never could reconcile God to man, for this obvious reason, because God is unchangeable: and for this equally clear reason, because he always loved man, consequently never needed reconciling to him; he only hated sin, and to that he is no more recon-

ciled than he was before Christ died, nor can he ever be reconciled to sin unless he were capable of ceasing to be holy. The scriptures never speak of Christ's reconciling God to the world; but of God's reconciling the world to himself by Jesus Christ. Had the Almighty ever been wrathful and vindictive he must have eternally remained so; for this clear reason, because he is unchangeable. If he ever loved his creatures, and felt nothing but love towards them, say when he made them, or when Christ had died for them, it must follow that he hath never for a moment ceased loving them, nor ever felt any thing but love towards them; for the reason already alledged, because he is unchangeable. In the only place in the New Testament were the word atonement occurs (Rom. v. 11.) it is not God, but man, who is said to have received the atonement. From all these considerations it is evident, Christ did not make an atonement to God for the sins of men, that he did not atone the divine wrath, nor reconcile the Most High to his creatures.

6. The notion of Christ's making satisfaction for the sins of men, veils the infinite loveliness of the divine character. It places him in the back ground, in dark shades, to illustrate the superior amiableness of his Son and servant, the meek and lowly Jesus. The loving father of all, the infinite source of every good, it arrays in infinite terrors: it fills the bosom of infinite love with wrath and fury: it distorts the features of infinite loveliness with anger infinitely fierce, and vengeance which cannot be averted until

it be fully satiated, either with the blood of the innocent or the guilty: it shades the brow of infinite excellence with vindictiveness and revenge. In plain language, the doctrine of satisfaction represents the one God and Father of all, as a wrathful, vindictive being, who either will not, or cannot, extend his mercy to sinners, and receive them to his favor, unless an innocent person makes atonement to him for their sins, by enduring his wrath in their place and stead. The Son it represents as a very different character, as every thing that is amiable and affectionate: in him no wrath, nothing vindictive, is seen: he stands between his angry Father and offending man, endures in his own person all the weight of his displeasure, all the fierceness of his wrath, and so shelters sinners 'From the eye of a revenging God,' and makes him 'well-willing' towards them. Who in such a representation can recognize the God of love, the infinite Father of mercies, who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all his works, who delighteth in mercy, and is ever ready to forgive? If the character of God be what the scriptures declare it, if he be not a wrathful, vindictive being, if his nature be not revengeful,—in a word, if God be LOVE, satisfaction for sins could never be necessary 'to make him favorable and merciful to us.' On the other hand, the supposing satisfaction for sins necessary, 'to make the Father favorable and merciful to us,' implies a denial that mercy and grace are essential to his nature; and involves the supposition that they are excited in him by some external

cause. Surely a doctrine which involves so many things incompatible with the divine character cannot be true. This argument is strengthened by the consideration that Christ is said to be the image of God; but, according to what we have noticed above, he and the Father would form a striking contrast. How could his sympathising tenderness illustrate the Father's vindictiveness? his loving and forgiving temper the Father's wrathfulness? If his temper and conduct be illustrative of the character and conduct of the Father, as made known by his teachings, it is certain God never was wrathful and vindictive, and that Christ never taught the popular doctrine of atonement.

7. The doctrine of satisfaction degrades the justice of God, by supposing it to be a vindictive, revengeful principle, ever thirsting for blood, and to be satisfied with nothing short of the blood, either of the innocent, or of the guilty: and that, even after plunging its vengeful sword in the soul of the innocent, it still pursues multitudes of the guilty, whose punishment he bore, and exacts a second payment of debts which the innocent victim paid with his own blood, and relentlessly plunges them in the flames of hell, because they cannot satisfy its demands, which were all satisfied by his suffering in their stead: that it first demanded the life of God's holy one, devoted him, as an accursed person, to the death of the cross, inflicted on him 'the very pains and torments of hell,' and was incapable of being satisfied without his blood, and then charged his crucifiers with mur-

der because they shed his blood, and subjected them to the most exemplary punishment for their conduct, though they are supposed to have done no more than justice required should be done, and that God 'decreed that those very persons should be the actors of this vile tragedy, who acted therein, and not others.' No, the doctrine which arrays the justice of that being who is LOVE in such frightful colors, abhorrent even to the feelings of common sense, cannot be true. Justice consists in doing that which is right; and both reason and scripture proclaim that it cannot be right to impute guilt to an innocent person, and to punish him for it as a sinner; the thing is declared an abomination to the LORD; Pro. xvii. 5. and he would not do what is an abomination to him: the law of God prohibited it; Exo. xxiii. 7. *The innocent and rightsous slay thou not*; and he would not violate his own law. If he condemned and punished the innocent, how could he find fault with others for imitating him. *Is God unrighteous?—God forbid; for how then shall God judge the world.* Rom. iii. 5, 6. To require the payment of debts which are already paid, or to punish crimes which are fully expiated, would be manifestly unjust. To punish men for doing what justice required should be done would be flagrant injustice; but either justice did not require that the Jews should put Christ to death, or such injustice must appear in their punishment.

The justice of God consists in his doing, in every case, that which is according to the rectitude of his holy nature, which is LOVE. Ought it to be

said, that the justice of God could not admit of sinners being pardoned without first exacting full damages on their account; seeing his justice consists in his doing that which is most right for infinite wisdom and goodness to do? How can it be proved wrong for a being possessed of these attributes to pardon penitent sinners freely? The justice of God, that infinite rectitude which governs the universe, is not unmerciful, it knows how to exercise compassion; this appears from the dealings of divine providence with sinful man. That man who is the least defiled, who has all his natural feelings in the purest state, and who feels the most of the influence of the gospel, will ever be the most ready to forgive offences freely, without exacting damages; he will be satisfied with the repentance of the offender; then this must surely be the case, in the highest degree, with that God who gave all the feelings of nature, and communicated all the influences of the gospel. Christ is called the just one, he was the brightest living image of the just God that ever appeared among men; did *he* require an atonement in order to his forgiving offences? did he call for satisfaction to be made to him before he pardoned those who did him the greatest injury? No, unasked, he sent a message of forgiveness to his murderers, he shewed himself always ready to forgive freely, to communicate favors without receiving any consideration for them: there was no wrath to atone in him, he waited for nothing but the penitence of the sinner in order to his pronouncing him forgiven. Such was the conduct of this

just person; and surely it may be regarded as an illustration of the divine justice.

8. To say that God cannot forgive sins without first receiving satisfaction for them, seems to limit the divine sovereignty, as well as tie up the hands of infinite love and mercy. If God be the absolute sovereign of the universe, and can do whatever he pleaseth, and who will dare to question this, it must be a prerogative essential to him to manifest his love, and exercise his mercy, when, where, and how he pleaseth—to extend pardon to sinners according to his sovereign will. To deny this is to deny his absolute sovereignty. Earthly rulers and governors possess only a derived and limited power, they are not superior to all law, they are not absolutely unaccountable for their conduct; consequently the prerogative of doing whatever they please cannot properly belong to them; but the power of the supreme governor of the universe is underived, he is superior to all law, for he is the original fountain of it, he has nothing to bind him but his own sovereign will, he is not accountable to any being in the universe, he ever acts from the pure dictate of his own infinite mind, and can do whatever he pleaseth: consequently he can, on the ground of his own sovereignty, pardon penitent sinners, without any other consideration but the mercifulness of his own nature. 'No,' say the advocates for the doctrine of satisfaction, 'God cannot forgive unless his justice be first satisfied.' Presumptuous saying! Have not these men read that he giveth none account of his matters,

and that whatsoever his soul desireth, even that he doth? Who shall dare to prescribe rules of conduct to his maker? to prohibit his showing mercy only in such a way as puny mortals, who have hedged themselves round with their little systems of reputed orthodoxy, may think proper? Let such men know that his thoughts are not their thoughts, neither are their ways his ways; that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than their ways, and his thoughts their thoughts. Isa. lv. 8, 9. The doctrine of satisfaction does not leave to the Almighty the free and sovereign exercise of his love and mercy. Whatever love and mercy it supposes to exist in God, none can be exercised unless an innocent person first suffers the penalty due to sinners, and makes expiation for their sins; consequently, the exercise of divine love and mercy is, by this doctrine, made not to depend on the supreme and sovereign will of God but on the satisfaction which the innocent person makes for the guilty. A doctrine which limits the divine sovereignty, and leaves not to God the free exercise of his mercy, according to his mere good pleasure, but makes the Almighty dependent, on what a third person shall consent to do and suffer on behalf of sinners, for the exercise of that attribute in which he delighteth, is not likely to be true; for God will ever do according to his own will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth.

9. The doctrine of satisfaction is hard to reconcile, if at all reconcileable, with the idea of sinners being

saved by the mercy of God. Mercy has for its object mere wretchedness and misery; it does not exist on the ground of merit or desert; it is pity flowing from the heart towards the unhappy, or distressed. The doctrine I oppose supposes that the divine clemency towards sinners does not arise merely from the pity of his heart, excited by a view of their wretchedness; but that it was merited for them by what Christ suffered in their place and stead; and where merit begins, properly speaking, mercy terminates. If justice received full satisfaction on the behalf of sinners, at the hands of Christ, if he, literally, purchased salvation for them, it is very difficult to find any room for mercy to be exercised towards them; they have, in that case, a right to salvation on the ground of mere justice, and may cry, not mercy, mercy, but 'Justice, Justice, my righteous God!—be just and faithful, to acquit me from that, debt and cancel that bond which my surety hath paid for me.' It would be difficult to say, upon this ground, what need sinners could have of the mercy of God; as every thing would proceed according to the principles of the most strict and rigid justice. The punishment due to the sinner is inflicted, justice receives all it can demand, the blessings which the sinner receives are honestly paid for, mercy seems out of the question. The advocates for the popular doctrine of atonement, many of them, cry out against those who found their hope of salvation upon the mercy of God, which makes it evident that *they* hope for salvation

upon a different ground: yet Jesus himself taught that the publican, who cast himself entirely upon the divine mercy, saying 'God be merciful to me a sinner,' went down to his house justified, rather than the pharisee, who thought he could claim blessings on some different ground. Indeed there is no ground of hope placed before sinners in the scriptures but the mercy of God, and that mercy is revealed to us in Christ Jesus. We ought therefore to reject a doctrine which strikes at the foundation of a sinner's hope, namely, at the free mercy of God.

10. The notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sins, seems incompatible with the doctrine of the free forgiveness of sins, which is plainly taught in the scriptures. If no sinner be exempted from punishment but on the ground of a substitute's having first suffered all the punishment due to him in his stead, it is difficult to conceive how it can with truth be said that the sinner has any thing forgiven—any more than an insolvent man could be said to have all his debts forgiven by his creditors, who would not have set him at liberty at all, had they not first received the full amount of what he owed them, at the hands of his surety. Many writers of credit, on the side of our opponents, have compared sins to debts, and have called the sins of men debts to the law or justice of God; they have also spoken of the sufferings and death of Christ as a full discharge or payment of those debts: now if this be the case what room or need is there for forgiveness? A debt cannot be both paid and forgiven. When the whole of a debt

is paid nothing remains to forgive. To talk of forgiveness after full payment is made is ridiculous. If sinners be acquited only on the ground of Christ's having made full payment of all the demands of justice on them, there can be no such thing as the free forgiveness of sins. If all the penalties due to the sinner were inflicted on Christ, no penalty is remitted, and where no penalty is remitted nothing is forgiven. One writer in defence of satisfaction (quoted in the preceding chapter) is ingenuous enough to acknowledge, that, on the ground of that doctrine, 'in a strict and proper sense the infinite God doth not *forgive* sin.' But if this be true the Most High, is no longer *A God pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin;* there is not *forgiveness* with him; *forgivenesses* belong not to him. What shall we do in this case? shall we give up every thing we read in the scriptures concerning *pardon* and *forgiveness* that we may retain the unscriptural notion of satisfaction? No, we will let that notion go, however orthodox it may be esteemed, and cleave to the orthodoxy of the Prophets and Apostles, believing that God will freely pardon the penitent sinner, that he is ever ready to forgive, and rejoicing that he hath forgiven us all trespasses.

11. It is no where said, in the sacred writings, that God pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by transgression, because he hath received satisfaction on behalf of the sinner; yet this should have been said, if he forgive sinners only on the ground of his being first satisfied, by a righteous person's bearing all the

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will have mercy upon him, and abundantly pard
without adding one word about satisfaction bei
first necessary.

13. Jesus Christ taught the doctrine of forgi
ness of sins, and illustrated it by parables; but
gave no intimation that a substitute was necess
to pay the debts of sinners, or satisfy for their si
before they could be forgiven. Take, for instan
the parable of the two debtors. Luke vii. 41, 4
There was a certain creditor which had two debto
the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fift
and when they had nothing to pay he frankly forga

them both. Here was a fit occasion for Christ to have introduced a surety as paying the debt, and no doubt he would have done it had it been illustrative of God's method of saving sinners. An advocate for the popular notion of atonement would not have failed to insist on the necessity of the debt being paid before justice could suffer it to be cancelled, that as the debtor could not pay it himself some other person must pay it for him; but Christ gave not the least intimation that a surety was necessary to pay the debt, or that any payment was required, indeed what he said proves that the debt was cancelled without being paid; he made the consideration which led to the cancelling of it to be, not the payment of its amount by a sponsor, but the inability of the debtor to pay any thing: this was his method of illustrating the way in which God forgives sins, and saves sinners. In another parable (Matt. xviii. 23—35,) he represented forgiveness as bestowed in consideration of penitence and prayer, and that if any thing prevent the sinner, who supplicates for it, receiving the remission of sins, it is his not acting in a proper disposition to others. In the whole account, Christ dropped not one word respecting either debtor, or creditor, supposing a third person must pay the debt before it could be forgiven; but throughout he represented it either as cancelled without payment, or as still standing against the principal. Hence it is clear Jesus Christ gave no countenance to the popular notion of atonement, but taught an opposite doctrine. If the doctrine of sa-

tisfaction be true, it must be the most important article in the affair of forgiveness, and such I believe its advocates esteem it; but, were this the case, it would be very strange that Christ should be totally silent respecting this most important article when expressly illustrating the way of forgiveness. This argument is strengthened by the remembrance that when Jesus said, he had power on earth to forgive sins, he gave not the least intimation that he had bought and must pay for that power; which would be the fact on the supposition of satisfaction; for, if no sin could be forgiven unless its punishment was borne, he must have bought and paid for the power of forgiving it by bearing that punishment.

14. The law of God has been placed in a false light by the belief of the doctrine of satisfaction. Hence the divine law has been represented as requiring of us what is impracticable, as being a mere covenant of works, as knowing nothing of mercy; and it has been said, that no man since Adam, except Christ, ever did or could keep it, and that it would be dishonored if a sinner were pardoned without an innocent victim's first suffering its penalties. On these points I will animadvert.

By the phrase, *the Law*, as it is generally used by the sacred writers, I understand, that code, or dispensation, which was given to Israel, during the ministry of Moses. This law was not in being until it was given at Mount Sinai, it was given by Moses, John i. 17, consequently, its penalties could not attach to those who lived before it was given; for it

cannot reasonably be supposed that God will judge his creatures by an *ex post facto* law. The law and its penalties could never belong to any but those to whom it was given; for it would be charging God foolishly to suppose he would subject his creatures to the penalties of a law which he never gave them, but of which they were unavoidably ignorant. The law was never given to the Gentiles, but to the people of Israel only: Paul said the Gentiles had not the law; Rom. ii. 14, and that what things soever the law said, it said to them who were under it, Chap. iii. 19, meaning the Jews. Christ did not extend the law beyond the jewish nation: he did not commission his Apostles to carry it to the Gentiles: he sent the gospel, not the law, to be preached to all nations. The law was superseded by the full introduction of the gospel: by the more perfect code, or dispensation, which Christ introduced: so Paul contended (Gal. iii. 24, 25.) that the law was a school-master unto Christ; but that after faith, or the truth of the gospel, is come, we are no longer under the law: hence it is clear that the ministration of the law terminated when the ministration of the gospel was fully introduced. It follows that whatever curses the law denounced, whatever penalties were incurred by the breach of it, they did not attach to the Gentiles who had not the law, they cannot belong to those who live under the gospel, for the ministration of the law extends not to them; it also follows, that Christ could not bear the curse of the law for us Gentiles who were never under it,

and of course could never be under its curse. O sins have been committed against the gospel, und which we were born, have all along lived, and l which we must be judged. Had Christ made sati faction to the law for the sins of men, it could on have been for the sins of those who lived under it and it would have been no satisfaction for our si who were never under it; had he borne the penalti due to those who sin against the gospel, and ma satisfaction for them, he must have borne the pena ties which himself hath announced in the New Te tament, and have made satisfaction, not to the la but to his own gospel. If it be said, all have sinn against the moral law, and it was necessary Chri should make satisfaction to the moral law on the behalf. It is answered that the moral law, as di tinguished from the law of Moses, must intend tl law of nature, or those obligations which result fro the nature and relation of things. But the law nature breathes no curses, it inflicts no penaltie but what arise from evil actions. The moral law cann be satisfied in any way but by the due fulfilment moral obligations; it accepts not of mulcts and p nalties in lieu of personal moral excellence, mu less can vicarious sufferings answer its demands.

It has been asserted that the law of God requir what creatures have not power to perform, and tha consequently, some other person must satisfy its d mands; but this is to make the law of God unju If a law require me to act beyond my strength, do what I never had power to do, it is evidently a

unjust law. It makes no difference to say that a predecessor of mine, an hundred generations back, had power to keep such a law; for, if so, it might be just to require it of him, but it is neither reasonable nor just to require me to perform impossibilities, and it would be absolute cruelty to punish me for not performing them. An impracticable law can be neither just nor good; not just because impracticable, not good because it can be of no use as a rule of conduct; and, if there be severe penalties attached to the non-performance of what it requires, it must be cruel and infamous. It would be as proper to condemn a man for not creating a world as it would be to condemn him for not obeying a law which he had not power to obey. This cannot be a true description of any law which God ever gave, he is too just and good to require impossibilities of his creatures; much less to punish them for not performing impossibilities. He is not a hard master, reaping where he hath not sown and gathering where he hath not strewed: not like cruel Pharoah who required bricks without straw: he accepteth according to what a man hath. To say that the people to whom the law was given were incapable of keeping it, is to charge Moses and the God of Israel with solemn mockery, in calling upon them, and pressing them by the most weighty considerations, to keep it; and with the greatest cruelty, in denouncing the most awful curses on those who should break it.

But, it is said the law was given to convince and

condemn men, that they might see the necessity of its demands being satisfied by Christ, in their place and stead, and that 'to convince and to condemn is all the law can do;' but if so why was not this declared when the law was first given? Why were the people mocked with the idea that life was set before them in the law, and that they might attain life by obeying it? And why did an Apostle, ages after declare that it was ordained to life? Why were not the people told that the law could not be obeyed by them, that it could only condemn and curse them that it was given to convince them that they could not do the will of God, that they might trust in Christ's obeying it for them, at some future period? They certainly were not told any thing like this; but on the contrary, were assured that life was set before them, and that they might attain it by obeying the law: nor was the least intimation given that Christ should either obey it, or bear its penalties, for them. That the law became a ministration of condemnation and death, was owing to the transgression of it; and the gospel, in like manner, will become a ministration of condemnation and death, at the second coming of Christ, to those who disobey it.

It is argued that the law of God is so perfect that when a man has committed one sin, however small it can do nothing for him but condemn him, and that no man could be accepted by the law unless he was absolutely sinless; but how does this appear? If the law could do nothing but condemn and curse those who had once sinned, it could only condemn

and curse the people of Israel from the first day it was given to them; for they had already sinned: had this been the case, how could Moses have spoken of them as blessed above all nations in having that law, and living under the dispensation of it? Ought he not rather to have said they were cursed above all nations? for if they could receive nothing from the law but its curses, and they were become unavoidable to them, they certainly were placed under many dreadful curses from which other nations remained exempt. But this could not be the case. It would be neither wise, just, nor good, to give to men, who had already sinned, a law only adapted to pure and perfect creatures. The perfection of the law consisted in its being adapted to the moral state and wants of the people to whom it was given; as it is said (Psa. xix. 7.) 'The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul:' conversion implies the existence of sin, consequently, the law was adapted to men as sinners; it contained a provision for them as such; it did not require that men should be absolutely sinless in order to their being accepted with God; only that they should believe its declarations, conform to its institutions, and obey its precepts.

It has been said that the law was a mere covenant of works; but no such thing is declared in the scriptures. If the law required obedience, in order to the attainment of life, so does the gospel; the latter no more promises life to the disobedient than the former. Christ is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him; he hath declared that those only who do

the will of his Father shall enter the heavenly kingdom. But would it be proper on this account to call the gospel a covenant of works? certainly not; yet it would be as proper as it is to call the law a covenant of works, merely because it required obedience in order to the bestowment of life, and promised life to none but the obedient. The Sinai covenant was given, on the ground of God's previous promise of grace to Abraham, consequently it stood on the foundation of grace; and the law was not against the promises: (Gal. iii. 17,) its basis was the peculiar favor manifested to Israel in *Jehovah's* taking them to be his people, and the great deliverance he had wrought for them. The giving them his covenant manifested peculiar favor! Though the law made the knowledge of sin abound, yet in it grace did much more abound. Rom. v. 20. From these considerations, it appears, that, so far from being merely a covenant of works, the law was a covenant of grace.

Often has it been said, the law knew nothing of mercy or forgiveness; than which nothing seems more untrue. We read in the decalogue of God's shewing mercy to thousands of generations: under the law God proclaimed himself, *merciful, and gracious, pardoning iniquity, and transgression, and sin* His symbolical throne was the *mercy seat.* Many of the institutions, and requirements of the law were intended to display the divine mercy, and to bring the people nigh to receive forgiveness from God All these things we find in the law of which men have said, it knew nothing of mercy, and that it could

permit no mercy to be extended to the sinner, unless its demands were first satisfied. Hence it appears, that the law of God never was that rigorous system of stern justice, standing upon full satisfaction, and knowing nothing of clemency, which men have represented it.

Again, it has been said that no man ever did keep the law; but this is contradicted by facts. God said of Caleb 'He hath followed me fully:' surely it must mean, according to the whole tenor of his law; for had he deviated from it he had not followed God *fully*. It is said of Zacharias and Elizabeth that 'They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless:' Luke i. 6, it must mean, that they walked in all the ordinances and commandments of the law blameless; for this was the rule of their actions; and, had they transgressed the law, it could not have been said they were blameless. Christ said of Nathanial, 'Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile:' John i. 47. It must mean, one who kept the law. Hence it is evident there were, at least, some individuals who did keep the law.

It has been taken for granted by the advocates for the doctrine of satisfaction that the legal sacrifices were vicarious; but of this there is no proof: and there is substantial proof of the contrary. Not to enter into a particular examination of jewish sacrifices, for this place, as that will be done in another part of this work, suffice it to observe here, that it is evident they were not vicarious, because they were not

to be offered in any case when life was forfeited by the transgression of the law; consequently, not being vicarious themselves, they could not point to a vicarious sacrifice as their antitype.

It has been also taken for granted that the people of Israel knew that their sacrifices were typical, and that they could, all along, under the law, look through them to another and a better sacrifice; but how is all this to be proved? There is no evidence that they knew that the Messiah promised to them was to suffer and die. That some of their Prophets foretold his sufferings and death is no proof that they understood that it would be so; for many of the prophecies were not understood prior to their accomplishment. Before the time of David there was nothing revealed that can be pretended to be a prophecy of the sufferings of Christ: consequently many centuries must have elapsed after the legal sacrifices were appointed before the people of Israel could have any idea that Christ was to suffer: and it may fairly be questioned whether they had any idea that he was to suffer before the event actually took place. It is clear that when he appeared among them they had no conception of his dying, if he were the Christ; for they said 'We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever:' this proves that they thought that the true Christ would not die. Our Lord's own disciples, who, in addition to all they had learned from Moses and the Prophets, had been instructed by John the Baptist, and by Jesus, had still no idea that it was necessary that Christ should

die: the idea of his dying staggered their faith in him as the Messiah: and it cannot be thought that *they* were less informed than the rest of their countrymen. The ethiopian nobleman, though it would seem he was a sincere proselyte to judaism, when reading what is acknowledged to be one of the plainest prophecies of the sufferings of Christ, in the Old Testament, could not understand to whom it related. Hence it may be safely concluded that the people under the law had no knowledge that Christ was to die: and if they did not know assuredly that he was to die, it was impossible for them to view their sacrifices as typical of his death.

Had it been appointed for the Jews to offer their sacrifices as types of another and a better sacrifice, they ought to have been informed so; but did Moses give them any information upon this subject? Not the least intimation occurs throughout the whole law that their sacrifices were typical, and that it was necessary for them to look through them to another and a better sacrifice. They were left totally in the dark upon this subject. None of their Prophets pointed it out to them afterwards. Not a word occurs in the whole of the Old Testament respecting the jewish sacrifices being typical, or respecting the necessity of another and a better sacrifice as the antitype of them. They were often reproved for offering their sacrifices without having a proper regard to moral purity; but never for not having a regard to what is commonly called the great antitype of their sacrifices. It seems then it was im-

possible the Jews should know that their sacrifices were typical, because they had no information on the subject, or that it was necessary to look forward to another and a better sacrifice, or that the promised Messiah was to be sacrificed. If this knowledge be necessary to salvation now, it must always have been so; but had it been necessary under the law it would certainly have been communicated.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews having applied the jewish sacrifices as types and figures, proves nothing respecting their being so in their original institution; for he was writing to Jews, and makes much use of the *argumentum ad hominem*, his design seems to have been to show that whatever advantages they might boast as derived from the law, superior advantages were to be derived from the gospel of Christ: hence he makes comparisons wherever he thought the subject would bear it.

It has been further said the law would be dishonored if a sinner were pardoned without an innocent victim first suffering in his place and stead; but this is contradicted by matter of fact. When David had sinned in the affair of Uriah, and the law admitted of no sacrifice in his case, of no innocent victim to bleed for his crime, God, by his Prophet, declared that he had put away his sin: nor did the law interpose, and say it was unjust, that David's sin could not be pardoned until its demands were first satisfied by a vicarious sacrifice. David, without any idea of an innocent victim suffering in his place and stead, cast himself on the mercy of God, presenting to him

the sacrifice of a broken and contrite spirit, believing that he would not despise that sacrifice: nor did he despise it. This proves that God can, consistently with his law, forgive sins, though no other sacrifice be presented to him but a broken and contrite spirit.

I have been the more particular in my remarks on the divine law, because through mistaken notions of it many arguments are constructed in favor of the doctrine of satisfaction.

15. The gospel exhibits free salvation to a guilty world: it proclaims pardon on the ground of divine free favor. Christ, and all the blessings enjoyed through him, are said to arise from the great love and rich mercy of God. The doctrine of satisfaction seems to strike at the foundation of this system of free grace and salvation; by laying as the foundation of redemption—not the great love and rich mercy of the Deity, but—a vicarious sacrifice, by which it is supposed the wrath of God was appeased, his vengeance satiated, and he reconciled; and so placing the whole transaction before us in the light of a bargain, not of a free gift arising from nothing but love. If the blessings of the gospel come to us 'in the way of a contract or bargain,' how can they come to us in the way of free gift? If Christ procured our salvation by bearing all the penalties due to us for our sins, by letting justice 'fetch its pennyworths out of his blood,' how can it be true that we are saved by the free favor of God? If the

wrath of God be turned from us merely because Christ hath endured the whole of it in our place and stead, how can it be true that the mercy of God to us flows from the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins? on that supposition it rather flows from the satisfaction his justice has received at the hands of our substitute. Grace means favor; free-grace, free-favor; but where every thing proceeds according to contract, stipulation, or bargain, and is bought and paid for, nothing can be a free gift, and free favor is out of the question. What is bought and paid for can never, with truth, be said to be freely given. What is contracted for, and received in consequence of its full value being given for it, cannot be of grace, it must be of works, even of the works of him who paid the proper price of it. If the work of Christ, in suffering, satisfied all the demands of justice on our behalf, and paid the full price of our salvation, it follows that our salvation arises from a work done, though not by us; and how then can it be said that we are saved by the grace of God? Our opponents have long claimed the title of advocates for free-grace; but to this title they can have no just claim, while they continue to assert that we should never have been saved had not Christ paid to God, or to his justice, an equivalent, or consideration, for our deliverance. Free-grace excludes the idea of bargain, equivalent, satisfaction for sin, and every other consideration, as an inducement, but the benevolence of the giver. If all the blessings of the gospel flow from the great love of God,

they are not procured at his hand by an equivalent which Christ gave to him. If salvation be by grace, it is not procured by any work done, either by ourselves, or any other person for us. If we are saved by the free favor of God, it follows that we are not saved by a satisfaction made to his justice, in consequence of which it ceases to have any further demand upon us, such satisfaction being incompatible with free favor.

16. The scheme of satisfaction lays, as the foundation of hope for sinners, something out of and distinct from God. It leads not to the unmerited favor and mere mercy of God, as a source of relief to the sinner who is filled with remorse; but to the merits of Christ, and of his death: as if God would have been incapable of showing any favor unless some one had merited it! It places in view, not God's readiness to forgive arising from the pure benevolence of his nature, but the innocent Jesus falling the victim of divine wrath, agonizing under the weight of our guilt and punishment, and a vengeful God appeased by the exquisite sufferings of his beloved Son, immolated by his own hand, to render him favorable to sinners. It encourages no confidence in the pure love and mere mercy of God, in the simple beneficence of his nature; but leads the guilty creature to think that his only chance of escaping divine wrath is, that, so far as due to him, it exhausted itself on the head of the holy Jesus. It leads to the supposition that there is nothing in God, in his character, in his essential mercifulness, that

could have given any hope to a sinner, had not his vengeance been satiated with the blood of an innocent person. But so far from Christ and his death, in distinction from what God is in and of himself, being the only ground of hope to sinners, an Apostle hath declared that Christ was manifested, offered himself to God, was raised and glorified that our faith and hope might be in God. 1 Pet. i. 19—21. All that Christ did is intended to lead us to God, and establish our hope in him. In opposition to this the scheme of satisfaction supposes the only ground of our hope to be Christ's having given to God an equivalent, or consideration for our deliverance.

17. If Christ had made full satisfaction to divine justice for the sins of the world, by bearing the whole of the punishment due to them, there could have been no further punishment of sin. Many of the advocates for the satisfaction scheme say that Christ satisfied, or made atonement to God, for the sins of the whole world; that justice received at his hand, as the surety, the whole of its demands on sinners, and that he suffered all the penalties of a broken law. If all this be true there can be no future punishment; for if the sins of the whole world be atoned, or satisfied for, there can be nothing to bring into judgment, or to punish hereafter. If justice received all its demands at the hand of Christ, as the surety of sinners, it can have nothing to demand of the sinner: it would be unjust first to receive full payment of the surety and afterwards demand a second payment of the principal; for the surety's paying the debt must

in the eye of all law, and common sense, fully exonerate the principal. If Christ suffered all the penalties of a broken law, in the place and stead of sinners, it can have no further penalty to inflict: consequently there can be no future punishment. Those who maintain universal salvation, and deny all future punishment, are the only advocates for the doctrine of satisfaction who are consistent with themselves; they, in this instance admit its just consequence. Yet it is evident, from what we read in the New Testament, that the wicked will be punished hereafter, that justice will inflict terrible penalties on them: and who will dare to say that their punishment will be unjust? Hence it is clear that Christ hath not made satisfaction for their sins, that he hath not been punished in their place and stead; for if he had they could not, justly, be punished in their own persons. I am aware that many of our opponents contend that Christ only bore the guilt and punishment of the elect, and that those whose punishment he bore will not be punished hereafter. So far they are consistent with themselves; but from the moment he had borne their guilt and punishment they ought to have been exonerated from all the painful consequences of sin, the guilt which he had taken upon himself ought not to have been laid upon their consciences, no guilty feelings ought [illegible] to have tortured their minds, no curse ought to have been denounced against them; if he endured the whole in their place and stead. The feelings of every sinner prove that Christ hath not made satis-

faction for sin; for he feels it charged upon him in his own conscience. If a friend pay a debt for me, I ought not only never to be called upon to pay it, I ought not, in justice, to be troubled about it; my creditor receives his due, and what can he desire more? If Christ had fully satisfied all the demands of law and justice, on behalf of sinners, they ought never after to have been troubled by either law or justice on the business.

18. If the doctrine of satisfaction be true, those for whom Christ died must have ceased to be accountable for their conduct. If he stood in their place, answered for them, and made full satisfaction for their sins, they have in fact nothing to be accountable for; he has settled every thing on their behalf. If all their sins were imputed to him, set up to his account, and atoned for by him; and his perfect righteousness be imputed to them, set up to their account, and so made theirs; if every thing which relates to them be transacted by a representative; how can they in their own persons be brought to judgment? and for what are they to be judged? If justice received full satisfaction on their behalf, at the hands of Christ, how can it call them to account? Thus it seems, the doctrine of satisfaction, if true, would destroy the accountability of man, and set aside the future judgment, at least so far as relates to those for whom Christ died. Such persons might well sing,

> 'He answers and fulfils his Fathers broken laws,
> 'Behold my soul at freedom set;
> 'My surety paid the dreadful debt.'

But Christ himself, as the minister of divine justice, will call every man to an account, and render to him according to his works.

19. The advocates for the satisfaction scheme contend that, when it is said Christ died for us, it means that he died in the place and stead of us; but if so, how comes it to pass that we die also? And might it not with equal propriety be said that, his dying for our sins, means his dying in the place and stead of our sins? that his appearing in the presence of God for us, means his appearing there in the place and stead of us? that his interceding for us, means his interceding in the place and stead of us? yea, might it not, by such a construction of words, be said that any thing which one person does for another, is done in the place and stead of the other? But the absurdity of such reasoning is manifest. Still it is frequently argued that Christ's dying for us must imply that his death was vicarious, and that he died to make satisfaction for our sins; but if so, will it not follow that when christians are called to suffer for Christ, and to lay down their lives for the brethren, they are called to endure vicarious sufferings, to die in the place and stead of Christ and the brethren, to make satisfaction for them; seeing the forms of expression are the same in both cases? Is it not evident that Christ's dying for us, means his dying *on our account*—not his dying *in our stead, under the weight of our punishment?*

20. The doctrine of satisfaction retains the old popish idea of works of supererogation. It supposes Christ to have performed, not only all the obedience

which he owed personally to God, but also a su of obedience sufficient to constitute all man righteous, without any personal righteousness of own; but this is incapable of proof. We learn the scriptures that Jesus Christ did and suffered thing in obedience to the will of his Father; vows of God were upon him; his law was in his h he became obedient to death, even the death of cross. Could Christ have deviated, in a singl stance, either in refusing to do or suffer whateve Father commanded, without transgressing his preme will? If he could not, did he perform than the duty which he owed to his heavenly Fat If all he did and suffered was comprehended in obedience which he owed to his God and Father, could any thing he either did or suffered be vi ous? I know not of any answer these ques will admit but what will be fatal to the doctrin satisfaction. As all that Christ did and suffered comprehended in his personal obedience to the w God, and was required of him personally by th ther, it follows that he performed no works of s rerogation, which may be transferred or made to others.

Again, if, as the doctrine of satisfaction supp sinners are made perfectly righteous by the imp tion of Christ's righteousness to them, independe any obedience of their own, it follows that all works of obedience are works of supe rerogat for they were perfectly righteous without t through the righteousness of another impute

them. But both scripture and reason teach that every part of obedience to God is necessary to him who performs it, essential to the character of a truly righteous man, that there can be no works of supererogation; consequently the doctrine which supposes the existence of such works must be false.

21. Again, the notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sins establishes the doctrine of merit, yea even of human merit. Its advocates are continually talking of the merits of Christ, and that they expect all blessings from God on the ground of the merits of Christ; as if God would bestow no favor unless some one had merited it! Yet the phrase, merits of Christ, is not to be found in the New Testament. It is fully admitted, that the merits of Christ stand very high with respect to us; we owe him the warmest gratitude and praise, as the medium by which all the blessings of grace and salvation are communicated to us; the favor which he manifested to us was great indeed: though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might become rich; he sacrificed his own life to effect our salvation, and he still lives to carry on the work; but, however great his merits with respect to us, however great the obligations we are under to him, he never claimed any thing of the Father, either for himself or sinners, on the ground of his merits, but received every thing as a free gift. The Apostles never mentioned his having merited any thing at the hand of God, either for himself or

others; but, on the contrary, they ascribe every th he hath received, and every blessing he bestows, the gift of his Father; which is incompatible with doctrine of satisfaction. Our opponents talk m of the merits of the death of Christ, as the c ground on which sinners have a right to expect vation; and they sing,

> 'Tis by the merits of his death
> 'The Father smiles again;'

as if God would have been eternally frowning u the world if Christ by his dying groans had not peased his wrath, and induced him to smile on, own works. The merit of Christ's death must be man merit; for it was the man Jesus who died. M of our opponents admit that it was the man, or man nature, only, that died. They contend t the same nature that sinned must make satisfac for sin; but it was human nature only that sin The merits of his death could only be the merit him, or that, which died, which is acknowledg even by our opponents, to be merely human; after all they say about the Godhead of Christ, t acknowledge that the Godhead could neither su nor die. Hence it appears that the merit of Chr death is, even on the ground of our opponents, man merit: and it is by his death, they suppose, made satisfaction for sins: it follows that the sa faction scheme changes the doctrine of salva by grace for that of salvation by human merit.

22. We are commanded to forgive others as God hath forgiven us; but what should we think of the christian who should determine to keep his insolvent brother in prison until some one in his stead had satisfied every demand he had upon him! should we not say he acted very unlike a christian? Yet, if the doctrine of satisfaction be true, this is what he is commanded to do; for, according to that doctrine, God, whom we are commanded to imitate, never remits a debt until he has received full payment. Alas, how frequently have men ascribed to God what they would condemn in a fellow creature! If we freely forgive others, and pray that God would as freely forgive us, which Christ hath directed us to do, either we greatly err in following his direction, or the doctrine of satisfaction must be unscriptural.

23. If it be true that pardon and salvation come to us in 'the way of a contract, or bargain,' and that Christ hath fulfilled the conditions of the contract for us, by making satisfaction for our sins, it is difficult to say what need there can be for us to pray for pardon and salvation. God is too just to fail in making good his part of the agreement. Our right to deliverance is founded in strict justice, if Christ bought and paid for it by discharging all we owed; and, in that case, it may be claimed, on the ground of justice; there seems no need to supplicate for it, on the ground of mercy, if nothing be left to the discretion of divine mercy, but every thing settled by a compact, founded on principles of rigid justice. Thus the doctrine of satisfaction would supercede the

ers of the penitent, and make God our debtor, the article of salvation, on the ground of value received, on our behalf, at the hands of Christ. It would also greatly lessen the gratitude we owe to God for pardon and salvation. We should owe unspeakable gratitude to Christ, for paying all we owed, or bearing all the penalties we had incurred; but, as the justice of God would remit nothing, as he would cancel nothing that we owed, nor pass by a single offence, until full payment had been made, our gratitude to him in the business would be limited to one point, to his providing a person to pay the debt. Surely a doctrine which would so greatly limit the sphere of prayer and praise to the Almighty must be false.

24. The doctrine of satisfaction has a licentious tendency. Far be it from me to charge all who believe it with being immoral; for I firmly believe many of its advocates to be men of steady piety and virtue: this however is not to be attributed to their belief of that doctrine, but to the firm hold which principles of virtue and piety have of their hearts, by which the pernicious tendency of it is counteracted. I fully grant that the advocates for the satisfaction scheme, do not perceive its vicious tendency, if they did, I believe, they would abandon it: yet I fear there are many who dare not impartially examine the scheme, lest they should be led to doubt its truth and if they once doubted its truth they would be very uneasy, and much dissatisfied with themselves: this proves that by believing it their consciences

lulled, and they led to rest satisfied with their present state though conscious to themselves that they are not altogether what they ought to be. A doctrine which leads men to think all their evil actions were imputed to Christ, and atoned and satisfied for by him, must greatly weaken the restraints, which check them when about to act wrong, arising from a sense of personal responsibility. If a man once believe that he may become perfectly righteous in the sight of God, independent of his acting right, by the righteousness of another being imputed to him, and this is what the doctrine I oppose supposes, a sense of the necessity of personal righteousness must be greatly weakened, if not entirely destroyed. A doctrine which teaches that one person may obey in the place and stead of another, and that his obedience may stand to the account of him who has never personally obeyed, as much so as if he had performed it himself, dissolves every moral obligation. Again, a doctrine which teaches that one man becomes responsible for the sins of another, and suffers all their consequences in the place and stead of him who committed them, and that the actual sinner is on this ground exonerated from guilt and punishment, destroys personal responsibility. Further, a doctrine which teaches that a sinner is made perfectly righteous, and viewed by God as a righteous person, by the righteousness of another being made over to him, prior to his becoming personally righteous in his spirit and conduct, renders personal righteousness unnecessary, in order to our standing righteous

in the sight of God. All these things the doctrine of satisfaction teacheth. It is left to the candid reader to determine whether a doctrine which dissolves every moral obligation, destroys personal responsibility, and renders personal righteousness unnecessary in order to our acceptance with God, can fail to have a licentious tendency.

Finally. The satisfaction scheme attributes to God what would be deemed vicious and criminal in men. It supposes him to give his creatures a law which none of them could perfectly obey, at least since Adam first sinned; that he notwithstanding condemns and curses them for not perfectly obeying it, and that he would spare sinners only on the ground of the innocent Jesus bearing the penalties of this impracticable law in their place and stead :—that God himself plotted and contrived the death of his beloved Son, who always did those things which pleased him, that he turned all his wrath against him and slew him with his vengeful sword. It makes God unreasonable in his demands ; by representing him as requiring what is impracticable, and punishing for the non-performance of it. It describes him as plotting, and spending his eternal thoughts about, what nothing but the wickedness of men could copy out and execute. If the treatment which Christ received at the hands of the Jews, be justly execrated, how much more execrable must it appear to plot and decree all they did, to be the author of what they were only the instruments ! how horrible to ascribe *such a diabolical* plot to the Father of mercies, and

make him the prime author and agent of all the cruel treatment his Son received! Further, it supposes God to do what is declared an abomination to him, what would be a breach of his own law, i. e. to condemn and slay the innocent. It supposes the infinite Father of mercies to slaughter his own innocent and obedient child. What should we think of that Father, who being full of wrath, and brandishing his sword against those who had offended, because his innocent and obedient Son, from the most virtuous and generous principles, stepped between him and them, should plunge it in *his* heart, and vent all the fury of his indignation upon *him?* Would you not shudder at the view of such a character? Yet this is the light in which the notion of satisfaction for sins places the divine character. The eternal principles of justice and goodness are invariably the same, at all times, in all places, and in all beings. That cannot, in the nature of things, be just and good in one being which would be unjust and evil in another. If that could be just and good in God which would be unjust and evil in men he would cease to be a fit object of imitation to his creatures; but the highest point at which a creature can aim is to be like God: in him every thing we, upon the most correct principles, call just, good and excellent must exist in infinite perfection; and every thing that would be unjust and evil in creatures must be alien, and infinitely distant from him: it follows that a doctrine which imputes to the Almighty what would stamp infamy on the *character* of a frail man cannot be true.

In this chapter I have endeavoured to point out the contradictions and absurdities involved in the doctrine of satisfaction, the consequences to which it leads, and to place it before the reader, as represented by its professed advocates, in its various tendencies, and bearings against reason and scripture. I do not charge the consequences involved in this doctrine upon those who maintain it; I expect they will not admit them; I charge only the doctrine upon them, this they receive as true; and the consequences involved I charge upon the doctrine. I appeal to the unbiased reader whether it do not involve every thing I have charged upon it. I have used no arguments but what I think fair and just; that either their fairness or force will be admitted by those who are determined, at all events, to retain the notions against which they are directed I do not expect; but I hope they may be thought of some weight by those who are disposed to enquire after truth, who are not afraid to re-examine what they have already believed, and who are willing to attend to evidence on both sides an important question. From the bigotted devotees of a system I expect nothing but censure and reproach; but from the candid and liberal I hope to obtain, at least, a fair hearing. If my arguments be weak and pointless they may be borne with the more patience, there will be the less reason for those who espouse the doctrine I oppose to to be alarmed and angry on the occasion, and it certainly will be the more easy to refute them. If any person, who thinks the doctrine of satisfaction a

fundamental article of christian faith, can, and will, fairly answer the arguments contained in this chapter, he shall have my thanks, I will lay aside my objections to that doctrine, and quit the ground on which I now stand. Truth is the only object worth pursuing, and let it be followed, on whatever side it may appear, or to wherever it may lead. If the arguments I have constructed should alarm the advocates for the doctrine against which I plead, if they show themselves angry on the occasion, use what means they can to keep persons from attending to and examining what I have said, and load the person who has dared to attack one of their favorite tenets with censure and reproach, I shall consider this as a fresh proof of the vulnerableness of their cause, and conceive that I have made some impression on the lines of reputed orthodoxy.

On one point I would add a remark here. I know our opponents will cry out that they do not deny either the mercy of God, or the doctrine of free grace, or the free forgiveness of sins, or the propriety of the prayers of the penitent; but that they steadily maintain these things. It is readily granted that they do not *professedly* deny, but maintain these things; yet it is contended that their favorite tenet of satisfaction is incompatible with them: this is all that is asserted in the preceding arguments; and, until this can be disproved, their system stands charged with many contradictions, and they with maintaining a doctrine inimical to the system of free grace displayed in the gospel.

CHAPTER THIRD.

An attempt to account for the rise of the Doctrine of Satisfaction among Christians, and its continuance to the present day.

IT may be asked, if the doctrine of satisfaction be without foundation in scripture, how are we to account for its rise and continuance? To answer this enquiry is the design of the present chapter. It is very evident that christianity has for ages been grossly corrupted, both in doctrine and worship: and, as the above doctrine is not only without foundation in the gospel, but opposed to the whole tenor of it, it must be reckoned among the corruptions of christianity. Its rise and continuance may be accounted for on the same general principles.

1. A dereliction of virtue and moral excellence has in all ages been too prevalent; and men have been desirous of finding some succedaneum for personal rectitude and obedience to the will of God. The man habituated to vicious courses, and hackneyed in the ways of sin, cannot easily be brought to think that the safety of his state wholly depends on an entire renovation of heart and life. To believe a dogma is more easy than to make a new heart. No

difficulty attends the exciting of sudden impulses, and warm feelings, in comparison of what attends the production of new principles and habits. For a person to work up his mind to a persuasion that he is constituted righteous, by the righteousness of another being imputed to him, is a less irksome mode of getting rid of the remonstrances, reproaches, and scruples of conscience than by sincere repentance and newness of life. For a man to be told that he has nothing to do but to believe that Christ hath done all things for him; or, that nothing is necessary to place him in a safe state, in the sight of God, but to believe that Christ died for him; or, that his disclaiming all pretention to personal righteousnes, and trusting entirely to the righteousness of Christ for his salvation, will make him a christian, and constitute him an heir of glory; will ever suit the indolent soul, and be to the taste of the slaves of vice, when they feel themselves goarded by conscience. It is like the road which an ancient king wished to find to geometry, it leads at once to the object sought, without any conflict, pains, or exertions; but then it leads to it only in imagination. Can we wonder that, among all the other corruptions of christianity, the doctrine of satisfaction should be introduced, which is so favorable to moral inactivity, and which teaches that men are made perfectly righteous, by the righteousness of another being imputed to them, even before they begin to do right. Men have ever been seeking an impunity in vice, and an exemption from the rigid prescriptions of un-

bending virtue: in this doctrine they find such impunity and exemption; for it teaches that a substitute bore all their punishment, and that a substitute wrought out a perfect righteousness for them. From the known disposition of mankind to obtain peace of conscience, while destitute of strict conformity to the will of God, we may account for the rise and continuance of this doctrine.

2. In all ages, men have greatly erred in their thoughts of the divine character; they have been too apt to think God, in some sense, such an one as themselves. Mistakes of this kind have tended much to promote the doctrine in question. The following short tale may serve both to illustrate the doctrine I oppose, and help us to account for its prevalence among the professors of the gospel. A certain man lives in a splendid mansion, he is possessed of a large estate, he has much property besides his estate, and is the most powerful man in his neighbourhood. On one corner of his estate stands a humble cottage, inhabited by a poor defenceless peasant, who is wholly dependant on him, and under his authority. The rich man has in his garden a tree laden with fruit: the poor man, happening to observe this tree, ventures to taste of the fruit: the rich man sees him do this, and becomes very angry, threatens him with the utmost rigor of the law, declares his determination to turn him out of the cottage, and ruin both him and his family. The poor man laments his fate, he acknowledges that he did wrong in touching the fruit; but cannot appease the

anger of his lord. Whilst he is deploring his hard case one of the servants reminds him that his lordship has a son, a very amiable, compassionate youth, that he has great influence with the old gentleman, and that he would sooner risk his fathers displeasure than omit a benevolent action. The poor man commits his cause to the son, who interposes in his favor, appeases his father's wrath, and the matter is amicably settled. In some such light have many conceived of the character of God and the mediation of Jesus Christ. Their ideas have been evidently borrowed from what they have observed to take place among men: from a wrong notion that the ways of God resemble those of men. Its being very general for persons to reason from men and their ways to God and his ways, accounts, in some measure, for the prevalence of the notion of satisfaction for sins: nor is it improbable that the transferring of human feelings to the Deity, and borrowing ideas of his government from what was observed to take place among mankind, helped to give rise to that notion.

3. We know that opinions which have been long received, and have obtained a general currency in the world, do not soon lose their influence. Though those who have entertained them should become acquainted with new facts, and receive many new ideas, they would be in danger of intermingling with them, in whole or in part, some of their old opinions. It is probable this was the case with the Gentiles when they received the profession of the gospel. It is a clear *fact that some* of the errors of paganism, and

the gentile philosophy, were early brought into christian system, and that, in process of time, ch tianity was much heathenised. The heathen c ceived of their gods as subject to anger and wr as sometimes becoming vindictive, and that t might be appeased, and rendered favorable, by g and sacrifices. These heathen notions were at le grafted upon the gospel, and received as a pa christian truth. The vicinity of pagan neighb might help forward this corruption, by a miscon tion among christians that what was spurious in old superstition was a reality in the true religio When christianity became the religion of the em pains were soon taken to make the christian ch bear a strong resemblance to the pagan hierar and to make the religion of Jesus as much as posi to the heathen taste; hence much of paganism infused into it. The ignominious death of C had long been a stumbling block, and a rock o fence, which christians had discovered a dispos as much as possible to remove; to represent it a carious, and as literally the price of our salvation, doing it effectually. The pagans valued their s fices, as the means of procuring the favor of gods, and to represent the dying Jesus as an exp ry sacrifice, by which the favor of the true God procured, was obviating at once their objectio christianity founded upon his shameful death. gospel was greatly corrupted in some other p before the notion of the death of Christ being v rious was thought of among christians. In such

cumstances the doctrine of satisfaction arose, and, no doubt, they greatly tended to its rise.

4, The Jews, though their law knew nothing of vicarious sacrifices, frequently manifested a disposition to substitute their sacrifices, and ritual service, in the place of moral purity and holiness. They sometimes degenerated so far as to suppose that, if their altars were but heaped with their bleeding and smoaking victims, they must be acceptable to God, and secure of his favor. Though frequently reproved by the Prophets of the LORD, they were not easily recovered from this error. We have only to suppose the same error, in reference to what Christ had done and suffered, to make its way among christians, as they degenerated from the purity and simplicity of the gospel; and, after having begun to trust to what he had done, instead of doing what he had taught, it is easy to conceive, how they would go on in a train of false reasoning, their want of moral rectitude prompting them, until at length they conceived his death to be vicarious, and his righteousness transferable to them; and, when once such an idea was conceived it would not be easily eradicated.

5. It should be remembered that the Apostles were Jews, and had much to do with the jewish people throughout the whole of their ministry. The idioms of their vernacular language would naturally occur in their preaching and writings: it would be a matter of course for them to make frequent use of jewish forms of expression, and accommodate them to the subjects treated of in the New Testament. They

would do this the rather as they aimed at displaying the superior benefits of the gospel, when contrasting it with the legal dispensation, in order to weaken the attachment of the Jews to the institutions of Moses: hence they would sometimes use jewish forms of expression in a figurative sense, to render the comparison between the law and gospel the more striking. From a careful examination of the Apostolic writings it will appear that what is here supposed was really the fact, When the peculiar circumstances of the Apostles were forgotten, especially in nations habituated to a less figurative style, their language would be misconstrued, what at first was merely an allusion would be viewed as a literal circumstance; and, gradually, legal forms of expression would acquire a meaning, among christians, which they did not bear, even under the law. Thus phrases which had been applied figuratively to Christ and his death, at length, by a rigid literal construction, were taken to express a vicarious sacrifice, an atonement of the wrath of God, an expiation of sin. The rise of the doctrine of satisfaction, among christians, may be accounted for on the foregoing principles.

In the preceding observations I have attempted to show that the existence of the doctrine I oppose may be accounted for, without supposing it to have any foundation in scripture. I proceed now to a more particular examination of some of those figurative expressions, in the sacred writings, the abuse of which gave rise to the notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sin.

1. *The wrath of God.*

This is often mentioned in the Old Testament, and a few times in the New; but we never read of wrath *in* God, or that his nature is wrathful: on the contrary, the declarations of scripture prove that wrath can have no place in him, that nothing wrathful exists in his nature. He hath said *fury is not in me.* GOD IS LOVE. He is *The Lord God, merciful, and gracious.* Mercy and grace stand opposed to wrath. That nature which is love can have nothing wrathful in it; for wrath and love are direct contraries. A being in whom there is no fury cannot be wrathful and vindictive. Had wrath ever existed in God, in him it must have eternally remained; because he is unchangeable. When the wrath of God is spoken of it cannot mean a passion which affects his infinite mind; for he is not subject to passions as we are. To suppose the sins of men capable of agitating the *Eternal* on his throne, by raising in him the passion of anger, is to ascribe omnipotence to sin, to suppose its influence extends to the Deity, and that the Almighty is, in some respect, dependent on his creatures for the feelings which exist in his changeless mind. To feel wrath is incompatible with perfect peace and happiness; but God hath ever been, and must ever remain, the very God of peace, the ever blessed, or happy, God: consequently it is impossible he should ever have felt anger, or wrath. The phrase, wrath of God, must be figurative; because not capable of a literal construction, consis-

tently with the infinite excellency of the divine nature. It simply imports the displeasure of God against sin. Properly speaking, it is felt, not in God, but in the creature. It is called the wrath of God because it is a painful feeling produced, in a sinner, by a view of the holiness of God, and an apprehension of his displeasure; or, because it is excited in the guilty mind by what God hath made known of his will. Strictly, it doth not arise from what God is, but from the apprehension the sinner has of him, associated with his own guilty feelings. Where sin and guilt are not, no feeling of the wrath of God can exist.

Two ideas will be found to express what the phrase, wrath of God, imports, wherever it occurs in scripture. Either it intends a sense of the displeasure of God, resting on the mind of the sinner; or, it intends the judgments which God inflicts, as a punishment of sin, to excite in the creature a sense of its evil nature. In reference to the former idea the wrath of God is said to abide on the unbeliever; i. e. an apprehension of his displeasure is not removed from him. In reference to the latter, when the judgments of God are stayed, or punishment averted, his anger is said to be turned away.

Without construing this phrase, the wrath of God, literally, the thought never could have arisen that it was necessary for Christ to atone, or appease, the divine wrath: and it is by continuing to give too literal a construction to such phrases that the notion of satisfaction is perpetuated. But, as it is evident

that wrath, or anger, taken literally, is a passion, it would be as absurd to understand the passages of scripture, which speak of it, in a literal sense, as it would those which mention the heart, eyes, ears, hands, and feet of the Almighty.

2. *God's being pacified.*

This is once mentioned in the Old Testament; Ezek. xvi. 63. but the expression is evidently highly figurative: to suppose the contrary would be to form a very gross idea of the Deity. Whatever may be meant by God's being pacified, it is not the death of his Son that is said to pacify him; nor is the time when he is said to be pacified the time of Christ's crucifixion; but the period when the punishment of the Jews shall have terminated, and they be restored and made happy. It evidently intends the turning away of his anger, in the sense given above, i. e. the cessation of the divine judgments upon that people. Yet by a too literal construction of this, and somewhat similar forms of expression, what a noise has been made, for ages, among christians, about Christ's pacifying the anger of God!

3. *The term bought, as applied to what Christ hath done for sinners.*

1 Cor. vii. 23. Christians are said to be bought with a price. 2 Pet. ii. 1. Immoral professors of the gospel are said to deny the Lord that bought them.

This language taken literally would place christian redemption before us in the light of a bargain, of sale, purchase and delivery, of a mere mercantile transaction, and involve the greatest absurdity: yet it was by construing such passages literally that the notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sins was first introduced; and it is by continuing to take them literally that notion is still maintained. The above passages must be taken figuratively or they cannot be made to agree with the general tenor of the gospel, as a system of divine grace: and if we compare them with other parts of the sacred writings, where similar forms of expression occur, the propriety of understanding them figuratively will be evident. A literal purchase supposes one who sells the thing purchased, as well as one who buys it; and the buyer gives a valuable consideration, something equivalent, to the seller, for the thing which he buys; what he buys and pays for he receives as his right, in a fair way of bargain, and every thing of free gift, or free favor, is excluded from the transaction. Christ could not buy sinners literally; because he received all things at the hands of his Father as a free gift, and the gospel is throughout a system of free grace, or favor, all its blessings are free gifts; nothing like a bargain, or mercantile transaction appears in any part of it.

Besides, if Christ bought sinners literally, the question will naturally arise, of whom did he buy them? It seems this question did actually arise, when the notion of Christ's making satisfaction for

sins was first thought of among christians, and the most general opinion was that Christ paid the price of our redemption to the *Devil*. Dr. Priestly observes, (in his history of the corruptions of christianity) that Origin was clearly of this opinion. 'If,' says Origen, * 'We are bought with a price, as Paul affirms, we must have been bought from some person whose slaves we were, who also demanded what price he pleased, that he might dismiss from his power those which he held. But it was the devil that held us. For to him we had been given over for our sins. Wherefore, he demanded the blood of Christ, as the price of our redemption.' Ambrose says,† 'We were pledged to a bad creditor, for sin. Christ came and offered his blood for us.' Austin says,‡ 'The blood of Christ is given as a price, and yet the devil having received it, is not enriched, but bound by it, that we might be delivered from his bonds.' Thus it appears that, when christians began to talk of Christ's buying sinners literally, some distinguished writers among them thought it was of the *Devil* he bought them: perhaps, they could not think of any other way of reconciling their literal construction of the passages we are examining with the scripture doctrine of salvation by grace. If sinners were bought literally it must either be of God or the devil; to say they were bought of God excludes salvation by his grace; to say they were bought of the devil

* Opera, Vol. ii. P. 486. † Grotii Opera, Vol. iv. P. 344.

‡ Opera, Vol. iii. P. 417.

will shock the feelings of most christians in the present day: there is no way of getting clear of these difficulties but by admitting that the language is figurative. The same, or similar, forms of expression frequently occur in the Old Testament, and are admitted by our opponents to be used figuratively. Deut. xxxii. 6. Israel is reminded that JEHOVAH *bought* them; but of whom did he buy them? what price did he give for them? Who does not see that the expression is figurative, and refers to his bringing them out of Egypt with a mighty arm, and their being acquired to the knowledge and worship of the one true God? So when God delivered them into the hands of their enemies he was said to sell them. 'He *sold* them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia.' Judg. iii. 8. But he did not sell them literally, he received no price for them, it only means that he delivered them into the hands of their oppressors. Again, we read of *buying* the truth; of the people having *sold* themselves for nought, and that they should be redeemed without money; of *buying* without money, and without price. Who does not see that all such forms of expression are figurative? And why should we not construe them in the same manner when applied to what Christ hath done for our deliverance from sin and its effects.

In the New Testament also, in several instances, such forms of expression are admitted, by all parties, to be figurative. Rev. iii. 18. Christ saith, 'I counsel thee to *buy* of me gold tried in the fire, that

thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be cloathed;' but are christians called to buy these things literally? does Christ sell the blessing of the gospel? by no means, they are only called to acquire the enjoyment of them. Acts xx. 28. *God* is said to have *purchased* the church; but of whom did *he* purchase it? surely not of himself: here the expression must be allowed to be figurative, and can only mean that those who believed were become a peculiar treasure, or people, to God. 1 Cor. vi. 20. Christians are said to be God's property in consequence of their being bought with a price: it follows that God is there considered to be the purchaser; but had they been bought of him he must have sold them, of course his property in them would have ceased. The blessings of the gospel, and the gifts of the spirit are, in the context, represented as the price with which they had been bought. The language is figurative; its meaning seems plain; God had acquired those who believed the gospel as a peculiar people to himself; he had done this through the gift of his Son, and of the holy spirit; consequently, they were bound to consider themselves as his peculiar property, and to devote themselves entirely to him. Now as a thing purchased is an acquisition made, and as whatever is given, or done, in order to such acquisition, may be fitly called a price; the Apostle, speaking figuratively, says, 'Ye are bought with a price.' In this way must the language be understood when the Lord is said to have bought sinners.

4. Its being said that Christ gave himself a ransom for us.

This has been construed literally, and understood to mean that he gave his life as an equivalent for our deliverance; but the word ransom is several times used figuratively in the scriptures. Isa. xliii. 3. It is said to Israel 'I gave Egypt for thy *ransom*, Ethiopia and Seba for thee.' But was this a literal transaction? To whom did God give the nations mentioned to induce them to deliver up his people when they held them in bondage? All parties admit that the language is figurative, and refers to God's judgments upon those nations being the means of the deliverance of his people. Pro. xxi. 18. We are told, 'The wicked shall be a *ransom* for the righteous;' but who ever thought that the wicked were to be given to make satisfaction for the sins of the righteous, or as an equivalent to obtain their deliverance? The plain meaning seems to be that the destruction of the wicked should free the righteous from the oppressive yoke of the wicked. God hath promised to *ransom* his people from the power of the grave, Hos. xiii. 14. But this cannot mean that he will give an equivalent to the grave for their liberation; the language is evidently figurative, and means either, that he would preserve them from death, in some particular case in which they were exposed to it, or, that he would raise them again from the dead. In the same figurative sense must the word ransom be understood when applied to the death of Christ;

it simply means that he sacrificed his life for the good of men, to effect their deliverance from sin and its effects; not that he gave himself to die in their place and stead. It is never said that Christ gave himself to the Father as a ransom price for sinners to deliver them from the hand of his justice; on the contrary, God is, several times, said to give the price, to give his Son for our redemption; it means that he gave him to be a savior, to effect every thing necessary for our salvation.

What I have noticed seem to be the principal forms of expression in scripture, upon a literal construction of which the notion of satisfaction for sins has been founded. Other passages of scripture, offices and relations ascribed to Christ, will be noticed in another part of this work. I next observe that the doctrine I oppose has derived considerable support from wrong notions of sin, and of the person of Christ.

It has been said that sin is an infinite evil, deserving infinite punishment, that, consequently none but an infinite being could atone, or make satisfaction for it. But how can it be proved that sin is an infinite evil seeing it is the act and deed of a finite being? To perform infinite actions requires infinite power; for no creature can act beyond his strength: it follows that sin cannot be infinite, because the act of a finite creature. If sin were infinite there could be no degrees in it, every evil action would be of equal turpitude; for there can be no degrees in what

is infinite. If the evil actions of men were infinite they would be capable of performing actions infinitely good; for the same powers which, when exercised wrong, produce infinite evil, when exercised aright, would, of course, produce infinite good. If sin be not infinite it cannot deserve infinite punishment; nor require an infinite person to atone, or make satisfaction for it. But it is argued that sin is committed against an infinite being, and therefore it must be an infinite evil, and of infinite demerit; if so, right actions, when performed from right motives, should be infinitely good, and deserve an infinite reward, because they have the pleasing an infinite being for their object; but actions take their denomination from the character of the person who performs them, not from that of him in obedience, or disobedience, to whom they are done. Hence it is evident the actions of finite beings never can be infinite.

It is probable that wrong notions of the person of Christ helped to give rise to the doctrine of satisfaction: certain it is that such notions have had a great influence in perpetuating it among christians. When it was once conceived that Christ was a second person in the Trinity, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father; and not a creature to whom God had given existence, it would be difficult to conceive how he could owe any obedience to the Father, or what room there could be for him to obey on his own account. The idea of his obeying and suffering in the place and stead of others might be thought a fit expedient to account for the imagined incarnation, obedience,

and death of a being who was supposed every way equal with the Almighty. As such notions of the person of Christ are altogether unscriptural it is likely the conclusions to which they would lead would be very erroneous. Under another view, on the supposition of Christ's being the supreme and self-existent God, the notion of satisfaction would involve the most manifest absurdity; it would involve the supposition that God sent himself into the world, imputed the sins of men to himself, punished himself for them, poured out all his wrath upon himself, appeased his own anger, and made himself, by the satisfaction he gave to his own justice, 'well-willing,' and merciful to creatures. Or, according to the unintelligible distinctions of Trinitarians, it would involve the idea, that one divine person in the Trinity satisfied the justice, and appeased the wrath of another; but if the Son satisfied the justice of the Father, and appeased him, who was to satisfy the justice of the Son and holy spirit, and appease them; for all the three persons being imagined equal, in every sense, the justice of each must equally have needed satisfaction. Whatever absurdities such a system may involve, when it is remembered how soon after the Apostolic age the doctrine of the unity of God, and the humanity of Christ, began to be corrupted, it may justly be conceived, as one error very frequently generates another, that the minds of Christians were prepared for the doctrine of satisfaction by the mistakes into which they had already fallen respecting the person of Christ; it seldom

happens that the mind is set right respecting the former only as it is rightly informed respecting the latter.

The popular notion of Christ's making atonement for sin, by enduring the wrath of God due to sinners, and so satisfying divine justice on their behalf, like most other corruptions of christianity, sprung up gradually, and ages elapsed before it was brought to maturity. To trace the progress of this corruption of the gospel way of salvation, from first to last, would be attended with considerable difficulty: several things however may be ascertained respecting it.

1. It appears that the Apostolic Fathers, the next writers to the Apostles in order of time, had no idea of Christ's having made satisfaction for sin, they did not use the phraseology of after ages when treating of his death, but contented themselves with speaking after the manner of the writers of the New Testament: had they been of the same opinion with the reputed Orthodox of modern times it is very likely they would have used similar forms of expression. On the contrary they used language very incompatible with the modern notion of atonement. They talked of God's being appeased by repentance and prayer, exhorted sinners to cast themselves on the divine mercy, and recommended them to learn how much a pure and holy charity avails with him. They represented, not the sacrifice of Christ, but of a broken and a contrite heart, and of moral virtue, as being substituted in the place of the legal sacrifices.

2. Though the notion of Christ's satisfying divine justice for the sins of men, is now thought by many a fundamental doctrine of christianity, it is never introduced as an article of christian faith, in any ancient summary of christian doctrine. Had those who wrote apologies for the christians, and gave accounts of the principal articles of christian faith, thought on this point as many do in the present day, and supposed it to be of the importance it is now made, it cannot be thought they would have been totally silent on the subject: yet, it seems, this was the case.

3. For several ages, christian writers, not only remained silent respecting Christ's having appeased the wrath of God and satisfied his justice, they expressed themselves in a manner quite inconsistent with that opinion. They spoke of the death of Christ as necessary to complete his example, as an accomplishment of prophecy, and as an illustration and confirmation of his doctrine. They spoke of the end for which he came in the flesh, as being, that he might set us an example of living, and dying, and rising again: that none who neglected to do the will of God might alledge in their excuse the weakness of the flesh: that in his passion he showed what we ought to endure; in his resurrection, what we are to hope for. Again, they talked of satisfaction being made to God by good works, and of sins being done away by the merit of compassion: of God's forgiving sinners on the ground of their repentance, as a father forgives his children: of gentleness of

mind, an innocent life and good works, being the sacrifices of God: of the blood of martyrdom, and personal sufferings, being accepted as a purification, and price of redemption: of some being redeemed by the blood of the martyrs. Further, they asserted, that we are not to suppose that the curse of God lies against Christ: that, though he endured the curses of men, he is not to be viewed as accursed: that he was subjected to the passions of the flesh, that he might teach virtue and patience, not by words only, but also by actions. These things are very inconsistent with the doctrine of satisfaction; yet such seems to have been the state of opinions, among christians, at least, down to the time of Austin. Need we wonder then that some reputed Orthodox men have charged the *ancients* with speaking *meagrely* of the satisfaction of Christ, and giving much to good works? or at their complaining of the imperfect knowledge which the primitive christian writers had of the christian system in this respect? But such charges and complaints only prove that the popular notion of atonement is, comparatively, novel, and was not admitted in the early ages of the church.

4. During the period I have referred to, controversies were started, and parties arose among christians, who denied that Christ actually died; such as the Docetæ, the Gnosticks, and the Manicheans. These, not admitting the reality of his death, could not believe that Christ became a vicarious sacrifice. Other christians, who maintained the reality of the

death of Christ, wrote against them. Had the Orthodox defenders of the faith on this subject thought, like the reputed Orthodox of modern times, that unless Christ had died, justice could not have been satisfied, nor sinners saved, it is natural to suppose they would have used this as an argument to prove the necessity of his death; yet this was not done by Irenæus, or others, who wrote largely against the Docetæ, and the Gnosticks; nor even by Austin, when writing against the Manicheans. A defender of modern Orthodoxy would certainly have contended that, by denying the death of Christ, his atonement was set aside, and the salvation of men rendered impossible. That the *ancients* used no such argument is a proof that their opinions were different.

5, After christians began to deviate from the simplicity of the gospel, respecting the nature and design of the death of Christ, and the embryo of the modern doctrine of atonement was formed, by a literal construction of the figurative language of scripture, ages elapsed before the idea was generally admitted that Christ endured the torments of hell, suffered the wrath of God, and satisfied his justice for the personal sins of men. For a long time it was supposed the price of redemption was paid to the devil, not to God: that Christ's dying instead of men was simply to put an end to their mortality, to recover them from death to a state of immortality: and that the price was paid by God himself. By degrees, however, something like the modern notion of satis-

faction obtained before the time of the reformation. About two centuries and a half after Austin, Gregory the great, who was the most considerable writer in his time, insisted upon the necessity of some expiation; yet he admited that our redemption might have been effected by Christ in some other way than by his death. This shows that he did not suppose a satisfaction to divine justice absolutely necessary in order to the salvation of sinners. Theodorus Abucara, a Greek writer of the ninth century, expressed something more like the modern opinion; he asserted, that God, by his just judgments demanded of us all things that are written in the law; and that when we could not pay, the Lord paid for us, taking upon himself the curse and condemnation to which we were obnoxious. So late as the eleventh century the popular notion of atonement seems not to have been fully admitted in the Latin church; for Anselm, one of the greatest theologians in that age, though he contended that it was necessary Christ should pay, what for sin man owed to God, admitted that of innumerable other methods by which God might have saved men, he chose the death of his Son. In the next century, if we may judge from Bernard, the doctrine of satisfaction began to be pretty well established among the Latins; for he speaks of imputed sin, and imputed righteousness, in the reputed orthodox way, and of the satisfaction of one being imputed to all; yet he argues that sin may be forgiven by the power of the divinity, as a man can forgive an offence against himself. Afterwards

appeared Thomas Aquinas, who became a kind of oracle in the Latin church, and his doctrine seems to have been that which was most generally received in it, and retained till the time of the reformation. He speaks of a man as a debtor to God as a judge, in consequence of sin, and to the devil as a tormentor: and that with respect to God, justice required that man should be redeemed, but not with respect to the devil; so that Christ paid his blood to God, and not to the devil. Though he admits that it was not naturally impossible for God to be reconciled to man without the death of Christ, and that he might have remitted the sins of men by his mere will; yet he evidently speaks of the death of Christ as that which reconciles God to men, and of his taking away the punishment of sin as a man making satisfaction to God.* It may be presumed that such continued to be the doctrine of the church of Rome till the time of the reformation.

On the whole it appears that the doctrine of satisfaction was invented long after the times of the Apostles: that it began to be conceived at a time when metaphysical disquisitions led men away from the simplicity of the gospel, that it grew up amidst the darkness of the middle ages, and was brought to full maturity by the reformers.

The derivation of this doctrine to the protestant churches was evidently from the church of Rome,

* See Dr. Priestley's history of the corruptions of christianity, part 2. of which I have made considerable use in this chap. The reader will there find a good history of the doctrine of atonement, supported by authorities.

though, perhaps, not in every circumstance the same as it became in the hands of the reformers. The romanists had connected with the merits of Christ those of his mother, and of the saints: these the reformers separated, and ascribed every thing to the merits of Christ. The doctrine of merit had taken deep root, every right idea of the grace of God seemed lost, it was supposed that some inducement must be presented to the Almighty in order to his forgiving sins, and communicating his favor to men. Wrong notions of divine justice had obtained, christianity had in a great measure been converted into a system of terror, and the God of love concealed from his creatures by the gloomy superstition of the times. The reformers did not suspect that the doctrine of merit was wrong, while the notion of merit was limited to what Christ had done. They did not question the received opinion of the person of Christ, and conceiving him to be God, it was not easy to conceive he could owe any obedience to the Father on his own account: hence it would be natural for them to suppose that he obeyed in the place and stead of others, and that his righteousness was transferrable. With the utmost propriety they opposed the sale of indulgences, and the notion of the supererogatory works of the saints, which were supposed to be transferrable to others, and to be set up to their account; but they did not consider that they proceeded on the same principle, when they represented the whole of the obedience of Christ as supererogatory, and his righteousness as transferrable

to sinners, and set up to the account of all who believe: they did not consider that to tell sinners that Christ had borne all their punishment in their place and stead, and that they had nothing to do but believe it, in order to God's accounting them righteous, was vending indulgences at a cheaper rate than the pope's agents sold them. While they opposed the popish application of a false principle they retained the principle, without suspecting the fallacy of it, they still supposed that one man might be accepted with God for the merit of another, and the righteousness of one be reckoned to another. It did not occur to them that no inducement could be necessary to render God propitious, and favorable to his creatures, and that it was as much a contradiction to the gospel system of free grace to suppose Christ had merited salvation for sinners, as to suppose the saints had merited it. They suspected not the common notions of divine justice, which represented the Father of mercies as a vindictive being, were erroneous; hence they supposed that, though the popish methods of rendering God favorable were absurd, he must be placated by some one, and they ascribed the whole work to Christ. They could not at once divest christianity of those terrors which had been entwined with it; nor see the infinite love, and mercifulness of God through all the gloom which superstition had raised around them. Men can only reason from those principles they are acquainted with, the reformers seem not to have been acquainted with the freeness of the divine favor as displayed in the

gospel; but they had heard much of the merit Christ, and of the saints; with the latter they w much disgusted, they determined to expunge for they perceived its absurdity and immoral us but no method of doing this occured to them t that of setting merit in opposition to merit, the r rit of Christ in opposition to the supposed merit the saints: hence they undervalued all good wor and directed men to build all their hopes of hap ness on the perfect satisfaction of Christ. They h been educated in the church of Rome, they h grown up in the belief of its doctrines, nothing p sented itself to lead them to question the truth many of them; they set themselves about reform what they perceived to be abuses, the rest they tained. It was not to be expected they should through such a complicated mass of errors at on and the doctrines they retained when they began reformation they could seldom bear to hear que oned afterwards, when they presided at the head different churches.

On the whole, the reformers did as much as mi be expected, considering the circumstances in wh they were placed, and the disadvantages under wh they labored. A few objects engrossed their cl attention, these called for continual study and ex tion, they had not leisure for the examination every subject: of course they left many things nea as they found them. That they retained the not of satisfaction for sins, is the less surprising, wh their views upon other subjects are considered. Th

belief of the doctrine of the Trinity, of original sin, of absolute predestination, and the improper views they retained of the divine character, together with their notion of the infinite demerit of sin, would confirm them in the supposition that the wrath of God must be appeased, and the sins of men atoned for, before they could be forgiven. It could not be expected that errors which had been accumulating for many ages should be all detected at once, or removed in a single age. We blame not the reformers, but those who, instead of going forward with the work of reformation, are determined to believe whatever they believed without duly enquiring whether it be true or false.

It should also be remembered that several of the reformers were much attached to the writings of the later fathers, especially those of Austin. Luther had been a friar of the order which bore the name, and he was much conversant with the writings of Austin: as he leaned to his notions of grace, original sin and predestination, so he would be likely to build much upon the passages in his writings which favored the doctrine of satisfaction. Being of a sanguine turn, and finding this doctrine suit his purposes so well, in his contests with the papists, he would be likely to carry it much further than it had been carried before. This was evidently the case with him and others of the reformers: and it is accounted for by considering the circumstances in which they lived, the nature of the contest in which they were engaged with the romanists, the modes

of reasoning to which they had been habituated, and the ancient writers to whom they were most attached.

Thus it appears that the doctrine of satisfaction in substance, came with the reformers out of the church of Rome, that they enlarged upon the subject, and carried to the utmost length the absurd notions of other times, respecting the vindictiveness of God, and the necessity of an atonement to appease his wrath, and render him propitious to sinners.

The doctrine of satisfaction being maintained by the reformers, was adopted by the protestant churches, and soon became establised as an article of faith among them: being once adopted it is not difficult to account for its continuance to the present time.

1. The pious labors, and eminent usefulness of the reformers, not only excited the veneration of their cotemporaries, but have commanded the respect of posterity, nor ought their services ever to be forgotten. They by a noble daring, with a firmness of character, a fearlessness of suffering, and an ardent zeal, worthy the cause of virtue and religion, broke from religious bondage, cast the papal yoke from their necks, and began to stem the torrent of abuses which had long deluged the christian world. They emancipated nations from the yoke of a foreign ecclesiastical despot, tore the veil of popish superstition which blinded their eyes, brought the scriptures to public view, and did much towards making mankind free, virtuous, and happy. But they were fallible men, they had their mistakes, they pushed some things to

extremes, and had but a very imperfect knowledge of christian liberty: hence they thought it right to frame new creeds and articles of faith, to give a permanency to their opinions, which were formed in the heat of controversy, and amidst a variety of agitating circumstances. The opinions they formed would naturally have a great and long continued influence. Men, in all ages, have been too much disposed to take things for granted, and to shrink from the labor of close investigation. To question the opinions of eminently great and celebrated men requires more strength of mind than christians in general have possessed. With veneration for the character and labors of the reformers has been blended a too blind veneration for whatever they maintained as christian doctrines. This has greatly tended to check freedom of enquiry on religious subjects, and to perpetuate many errors among christians, and among the rest the doctrine of satisfaction.

2. The puritans were a new set of reformers; but their views of reformation were restricted chiefly to matters of church discipline. The doctrines which had been all along believed by the generality of protestants they esteemed sacred; in particular they were zealous for the doctrine of satisfaction. Their eminent piety, patience in suffering, and numerous writings, which are still read by many of the reputed orthodox, have excited much deserved respect.—The respect in which the puritans have justly been held, has produced an undue deference to their opinions: and their writings are by many regarded as

a kind of standard of Orthodoxy. This is another circumstance which has helped to perpetuate the doctrine in question..

3. Many of the dissenting churches were originally formed by the puritans. This helped to perpetuate the influence of their writings, opinions, and names. From generation to generation the doctrines they believed have been instilled into the infant mind, by the use of catechisms fraught with their peculiar sentiments, before reason had attained strength to discern between truth and error: and it is well known that great difficulty attends the eradication of early prejudices. Though the dissenters have not written creeds, to be subscribed as a term of communion, yet too generally, those called orthodox, have a creed, or system of notions, an acquiescence in which is understood to be an essential term of communion: and a leading article in their creed is the popular notion of atonement, to doubt which is deemed heresy, and to oppose it involves excommunication. These things considered, the reader will not be at a loss to account for the continuance of that notion among the reputed orthodox dissenters.

4. The doctrine of satisfaction being made an article of the established faith, and interwoven with the service of the national church, it is supported by law, upheld by the strong arm of power, and perpetuated by act of Parliament. Besides the honors and emoluments of the established church are restricted to those who believe the articles, and can perform

the service, in which it is included. The consideration of this will help much in accounting for its prevalence.

5. Since the time this doctrine was brought to maturity, there have not been wanting men of learning and piety, who have seen its absurdity, and shown themselves ready to refute it. Faustus Socinus rejected it; but for doing so his name is to this day covered with reproach, by the pretended orthodox; they charge him with denying redemption by Christ, than which no charge can be more unfounded; for he says, 'We are saved however from the punishment of our sins by Christ, because by his great power in heaven and earth, he brings it about, that no punishment can reach us; and by the same power he will accomplish our entire and perpetual freedom from death, which is the wages of sin, and its principal and peculiar punishment. But this method of rescuing us from the punishment of our sins is very different from that which implies a satisfaction for them. Nothing can be more repugnant to each other than the freedom of pardon and satisfaction. Indeed, no man of judgment and piety ought to entertain the idea of satisfaction for sin; since it plainly does very much derogate from the power and authority, or the goodness and mercy of God.'* The tragical death of the virtuous Servetus; the persecution of those who denied this doctrine in almost

* Dr. Toulmin's life of Socinus, P. 186.

every protestant country: the late infamous riots at Birmingham; the cruel treatment of Dr. Priestley, a man who was an honor to religion and human nature; the envenomed shafts of calumny, and the bitter reproaches, levelled against all those who have courage to oppose the popular notions of atonement; are circumstances which, when duly considered, will enable us to account for multitudes being deterred, all along from the time of the reformation, from looking closely into the subject. None but persons of strong minds, or who are strongly influenced by the love of truth, will dare to attend to the reasoning of men whose touch (to speak figuratively) is supposed to be mortal, who are represented as enemies of Christ, and agents of the devil to corrupt the christian world, and that too by men who are regarded as a kind of oracles, by their party, and their opinions made the standard of Orthodoxy.

6. Many persons not only refuse to attend themselves to what is advanced against the popular doctrine of atonement, but they do all they can to deter others; by representing it as a doctrine essential to to salvation, that to reject it exposes to damnation, and that those who oppose it ought to be regarded as dangerous characters, as enemies to Christ and redemption through his blood. Such a mode of proceeding is unjust and unchristian; but it has its effect with many, they suffer themselves to be frightened, and dare not examine what is said in opposition to what they are told is so sacred. Thus what is thought a main pillar of Orthodoxy is propped for

a season, and the erroneous notions of darker times are perpetuated in the present more enlightened age.

7. To the present day there has not been that freedom of enquiry, among christians in general, which ought ever to exist. Prejudice, bigotry, party spirit, and illiberality have much prevented the detection of error, and the discovery of truth. I hope it will not be thought uncandid if I say that the notion of satisfaction for sin owes its continuance, at least, in some instances, to these things; especially when it is remembered that some men, who have at other times appeared candid and liberal, have lost their temper and liberality when they have had to do with those *they* call Socinians.

On the whole I would observe, that neither the prevalence of a doctrine, nor its long continuance, ought to be regarded as any proof of its truth. The worship of the Virgin Mary was once as prevalent in the christian world as the worship of her son. The doctrine of transubstantiation was as universally believed as the doctrine of satisfaction ever has been, the former, like the latter was built upon a literal construction of figurative expressions in scripture, and the former has obtained credit much longer among the Catholics than the latter has among the Protestants. If a doctrine be true it must be proved to by scripture and reason; there is no other just method of deciding.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

The Salvation of sinners by the free grace of God.

AS the doctrine I am attempting to refute is regarded by many as the only foundation of hope to sinners, it may be demanded what I would substitute in its place? I answer briefly, the salvation of sinners by the free grace of God. If this be well understood it will be perceived that nothing is lost by giving up the doctrine of satisfaction. But it seems necessary to enquire,

1. What is meant by the phrase *free grace?* Grace, in the sacred writings, generally means favor: the grace of God, means the favor of God: free grace, means free favor: what is of grace, is properly a gift; of free grace, a free gift: consequently what is of the free grace of God must be a free gift flowing from his pure benevolence. *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,* frequently means the favor of God revealed to us by Jesus Christ, in the gospel; as the law which God gave to Israel is called the law of Moses because given by Moses: nor did Jesus manifest any grace to men but by the appointment and command of his Father. Every idea of a con-

tract, stipulation, or bargain between the Father and Christ, of the latter purchasing the blessings of salvation of the former, excludes the idea of the free-grace of God; for what is bought and paid for cannot be a free gift, favor procured by an equivalent given to him from whom it is obtained cannot be *free* favor. If the notion of satisfaction admit an idea of the favor of Christ being free, the idea of the free favor of God it destroys.

2. What is meant by salvation in Christ, or by his name?

The salvation of sinners does not mean their being rescued from the hand of God which was stretched forth to destroy them, or their being sheltered from the sword of his revenging justice, or his being induced to lay aside his wrath and vengeance against them; but their being actually delivered from their former state of ignorance, sin, and the painful circumstances in which sin involved them, and their final deliverance from death. Salvation is not an ideal thing, a persuasion of mind, respecting certain transactions which passed between God and Christ, on our behalf, or respecting a certain work which Christ performed personally, on the ground of which it is imagined that our final salvation is fully secured, especially if we do but believe that he performed the work *for us;* but it is an internal and external deliverance, a freedom to the mind from the slavery of ignorance and vice, a purification of the heart and conscience from sin and condemnation, terminating in newness of life. No man can, with truth,

be said to be saved any further than he is actually delivered from sin, in his heart and life; from the love, the practice, and the contamination of it. Hence it follows, from the very nature of salvation, that Jesus saves us, individually, only so far as we are delivered, by the light and influence of his gospel, from ignorance, vice, and misery, and as he makes us wise, virtuous, and happy. Under another view, he saved the nations, who live under his dispensation, by delivering them, through the preaching of the gospel among them, from their former state of pagan superstition and idolatry; but this is not the view of salvation most necessary to be dwelt on in this place.

In Christ, frequently means, in his gospel, or in that dispensation which was introduced by him, and at the head of which he is placed. So the name Moses is several times used when not his person, but his law is intended. *There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust;* (John v. 45.) but the Jews did not trust in the person of Moses, nor did he appear personally to condemn them in the days of Christ; it was in the law they trusted, and it was the law that condemned them. *Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him;* but it was not the person of Moses they preached but his law. Moses was said to be read in the synagogues; (Acts xv. 31.) but it could only mean that his law was read there. In like manner the preaching of the gospel, which came by Christ, and was confirmed by his death, is called the preaching of Christ and him crucified. From

all the accounts we have of apostolic preaching in the books of Acts, it is clear that what they published to men was what God had had revealed by his Son; yet it is all called preaching Christ: it evidently must mean what Christ had made known by the gospel. So we read of believers being in Christ; but it can only mean, in the faith, under the influence, and in the obedience of the gospel: and the Gentiles who were far off, during the continuance of the dispensation of the law, are said to be made nigh in Christ Jesus; it must mean under the dispensation of Christ, the gospel, which includes them as well as the Jews, and is intended to bring the whole world nigh to God. Hence it follows that when sinners are said to have salvation in Christ, the plain meaning is, that salvation is made known, and all the means of enjoying it afforded, in the gospel.

The word *name* frequently means *authority*. Christ said he did not come in his own name, meaning that he did not come without proper authority: that he came in his Father's name, meaning that he had authority from God for what he said and did: that if another came in his own name, meaning without divine authority, him they would receive. Christ said and did every thing in his Father's name, that is, by the power and authority he had received from God. The Apostles preached and wrought miracles in the name of Jesus Christ, that is, by the power and authority they had derived from him. Hence Christ said, *he who receiveth you receiveth me, and he who receiveth me receiveth him who sent me:* he could not

mean he who received him, or his Apostles, pe
ally, for then no man could receive either hi
them in the present day, but that the person wh
ceiveth the doctrine of the Apostles, receiveth
doctrine, and that he who receiveth his doctrine
ceiveth the doctrine of God. It follows that, v
it is said *there is no other name under heaven g*
among men, whereby we must be saved, but the n
of Jesus, the meaning is, that God hath set f
no other person, as invested with power and au
rity, to reveal and dispense his salvation to men,
Jesus Christ: hence it is concluded that to be s
by his name means to be saved by the gospel, w
we receive on his authority, as evidenced by his n
cles and resurrection.

3. What is meant by sinners being redeemed
the blood of Christ?

Redemption, throughout the sacred writings, m
when applied to persons, actual deliverance from s
danger, evil, or bondage. The penmen of the
Testament never represent that we are redeem
merely, by Christ's having died for us: they inc
his death among other things which operate our
liverance: but they never speak of the mere ac
his dying as exonerating us from the conseque
of sin; on the contrary repentance, faith, and ob
ence, are insisted on as essential to our final salvat
Had Christ merely died, without rising again
sending his gospel to mankind, his death would
have redeemed the world. He is never said to l
redeemed us *from* God, or from the hand of di

justice; but he is said to have redeemed us *to* God, Rev. v. 9. to have given himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity. Tit. ii. 14. The redemption which we have in Christ Jesus is not described as a legal transaction between him and the Father, a settling of our accounts with divine justice by the payment of our debts, or as consisting in his removing by his death the incumbrances which stopped the course of divine mercy, and so rendering God propitious to sinners; but as consisting in our actual deliverance from ignorance, condemnation of conscience, moral pollution, and death,

It is by the gospel we are actually redeemed. By its light we are delivered back from a state of ignorance and blindness of mind. By its teaching and influence we are freed from inward condemnation, from the love, power and practice of sin, and, by what it reveals respecting a state of immortality, we are animated with the prospect of redemption from death and the grave.

Christ is said to redeem us to God by his blood, because it cost him his life to bring the gospel, with all its light and blessings, to the world; because he patiently submitted to all his sufferings in pursuance of the great object he had before him, the salvation of men; because his death was the confirmation of his testimony, and he sealed the truth and grace of God with his blood; and because in consequence of his obedience, even to death, he is rewarded with the dignity and power to which he is exalted, as a

prince and a savior, in the exercise of which he dispenses redemption by the gospel. No rational idea can be formed of the way in which we are redeemed by the blood of Christ, otherwise than as his death stands connected with the gospel, and his ministration at the head of the present dispensation. Thus it appears that we have redemption in Christ Jesus as we have it in his gospel: he came and revealed it, he lost his life in making it known, he is appointed by the Father to dispense it, and we enjoy it so far as we conform to his teaching and example.

4. What is meant by the justification of a sinner?

In brief the making him a righteous person; this is said to be by faith, because it is effected by the teaching and influence of the gospel, by the belief of and obedience to it. It may be divided into two branches. First, the deliverance of the sinner from condemnation of mind, and slavish fear, by the knowledge he derives from the gospel, of the pardoning mercy and forgiving love of God. The gospel calls to repentance, and exhibits the free forgiveness of sins, and all who repent and believe are said to receive the remission of sins. Secondly, the production of a truly righteous character, by inspiring principles of virtue and goodness, and leading to right actions. Under this view the gospel justifies, or makes righteous, the ungodly; as the belief of it becomes a practical credence, and produceth holiness of heart and life. God will not justify the ungodly in their sins; that would be contrary to the holiness of his nature, the uniform rectitude of his

ways, a violation of the law he gave to Israel, and highly injurious to the moral system; but he will freely pardon the penitent sinner, and, if he believe and obey his gospel, make him truly righteous, and save him from future condemnation. It is conceived that it is thus God justifieth the ungodly.

5. What do Paul and James mean by imputed righteousness?

The Apostles never spoke of the righteousness of Christ being transferable, or of his personal righteousness, whether it consisted in doing or suffering, being imputed to sinners; the righteousness which they described as being by faith of Jesus Christ, intends not his personal obedience, but the righteousness to which the sinner attains by believing, meaning by believing a practical credence. Imputed righteousness as stated by Paul, Rom. iv. 7, 8. evidently intends the non-imputation of sin, in other words, the free forgiveness of sins. But when, in the same chapter, he mentions Abraham's faith being imputed to him for righteousness, he seems to mean that his believing the declarations of God was reckoned to him as a righteous act, and that his believing the divine promises influenced him to obedience. James has clearly this idea, for he says, Jam. ii. 21, 22, 23. that Abraham's faith being made perfect by works, and his being justified by works, was an accomplishment of the scripture saying, that his faith was imputed to him for righteousness. Strictly speaking there can be no righteousness but what consists in acting right; and, though God freely par-

dons penitent sinners, it is impossible he should impute right actions to those who have only performed wrong ones; because it would be an imputation contrary to truth. He furnishes all the motives and means necessary to enable the sinner to attain to righteousness; but he will reckon none righteous but those who do that which is lawful and right. One thing Paul seems to have had much in view, i. e. that sinful Gentiles might become righteous persons without the works of the jewish law, that if they repented and believed the gospel, God would forgive their sins, and that by obeying the influence and directions of the gospel they might become such characters as he would account righteous.

AFTER the preceding remarks it may be proper to take a more particular view of divine grace, or favor.

1. It originates in the nature, character, perfections and immutable designs of God; not in any thing out of him, which induces or excites him to be favorable to his offending creatures.

GOD IS LOVE. That infinite, eternal, unchangeable being, whom heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain, is declared to be love. A boundless ocean of benevolence is found in the Deity. He is not a God of wrath, vindictiveness and revenge; but always loving, infinitely loving to his

creatures. No malevolence exists in his infinite mind, he bears not the least ill will to the most vile, insignificant, or worthless of his creatures; but the greatest kindness and good will to them all. He proclaimed his name to Moses 'The Lord God, merciful, and gracious.' He delighteth in mercy. In all his works and ways he shows himself good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. Can such a being as this behold misery, from whatever source it may spring, or in whatever corner of the universe it may be found, without being mercifully disposed to remove it? Can infinite love see wants any where, and not have a disposition to relieve them? Can any creature need a blessing from him which he is not disposed freely to bestow? Surely the infinite benevolence of the Almighty is a sufficient reason why sinners should expect salvation from him on the ground of his free favor, which spontaneously flows from his grand characteristic, LOVE.

The goodness of God endureth continually. In whatever light we contemplate that infinite excellence which is essential to the Most High, by whatever names of perfection we distinguish the different displays of it, goodness is still paramount. God hath never existed for a moment, through immeasurable duration, without being infinitely good. All his works exhibit legible marks of his goodness, nor hath it ever ceased to operate in any part of his creation. A being of such unbounded and immutable goodness, who is full of mercy, cannot fail to be ever ready to forgive, always willing to show favor, to

save sinners, to bless his creatures, to communicate to them all the happiness they are capable of receiving. The infinite goodness and mercy of God are a solid foundation of hope for sinners, and afford every encouragement for them, by penitence and submission, to seek salvation in a way of free favor.

Have we not all one Father? Christ hath revealed God to us in the character of a loving and merciful Father; not of an austere, relentless, vengeful judge. He hath taught that, if evil men know how to give good gifts to their children, much more will our heavenly Father give good things to them who ask him. He hath directed us to seek all blessings from the free bounty of the Almighty, even as children seek all they want from the bounty and kindness of their parents. As God hath condescended to assume the paternal character we may be sure he will sustain it in the highest perfection: whatever of kindness and affection can be illustrated by the love, the softest emotions, the bowels of compassion, the sympathy and tenderness, of the most affectionate parent, we may be confident, dwells, in infinite perfection, in him. How can it be conceived that any thing should exist in such a character to prevent his offending offspring from approaching him? or to render it necessary for some one to interpose to excite his pity and render him favorable to them? or to prevent their confidently expecting his favor, when they seek it with a penitent heart?

The designs of God towards his creatures have ever been benevolent; this appears from his charac-

ter, perfections, and the relation he is pleased to sustain as their loving and merciful Father: and his designs, arising from his infinite wisdom and pure goodness, are immutable. What favor may not creatures expect from a being whose nature is love? Whose goodness and mercy are infinite, who condescends to reveal himself as their Father, and whose design is to do them the greatest good? With what safety may every penitent soul rely on his favor for salvation!

Thus it appears that the favor of God to creatures is not founded upon an equivalent which he hath received for it; but that it hath its foundation in the infinite excellency of the divine nature, in his essential perfections, his adorable character, and immutable designs: and that the foundation of a sinner's hope remains unmoved, though the notion of satisfaction be taken away; for it is the eternal rock, God himself.

2. The favor of God to men is manifested by the gift of Christ, and by all that Christ taught, did, and suffered.

All that Christ is, both as a teacher and a savior, he is by the gift and appointment of the Father. Whatever grace came by him, whatever blessings are derived from him, whatever deliverance he works for us, must be ascribed to the love of God as its primary source. The whole work of Christ may be summarily comprehended in this short proposition, i. e. to make God known and carry his good pleasure into effect. He did nothing to make the Father love

us, to dispose him to be gracious and merciful to us; but every thing to show us how loving, gracious and merciful God is, in and of himself. The consideration of this should lead the sinner to terminate his hope and gratitude in God, to whose love he owes every thing, not in Christ by whom the Father's love and grace are manifested, and his blessings communicated.

Christ is not the cause, but the effect, of the love and favor of God to men. *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.* John iii. 16. God's love existed in full perfection prior to the gift of his Son: consequently the son can not be the cause, but, being a gift arising from his love, is evidently the effect of it. A gift bestowed of mere free favor, to be a universal blessing to mankind, cannot be the price of that favor, or the procuring cause of the blessings comprehended in it; but such a gift is Christ. It is clear that he is not the procuring cause of our salvation, or of the favor of God to us; because all the blessings of grace and salvation are comprehended in him, as the gift of God to the world. It follows that our hope of salvation should not be built upon any thing done by Christ to procure it, but upon the free favor of God manifested in giving him.

God's having raised up his Son Jesus, and given him to be a light to the Gentiles, and his salvation to the ends of the earth, is such a proof of the greatness of his love, and such an earnest of the riches of his favor to a sinful world, as ought to remove

every idea of his being wrathful and vindictive, and fully satisfy all men of the freeness of his mercy, of his readiness to forgive, and that he never needed any inducement to render him favorable. Having bestowed this precious gift, his beloved Son, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? It would be monstrous to suppose more favor in the gift than in the giver, or to think that what Christ hath done may be more safely relied on for salvation than the free favor of God who raised him up to be a savior. This would be to magnify the stream above the fountain from which it flows, to exalt the medium in which blessings are revealed above the original and eternal source of all blessings, and to suppose a derived fulness to be more abundant than the underived fulness from which it came; for all the fulness of grace found in Christ he received from the Father. What we discover in the stream should lead us to conceive of the nature of the fountain from which it flows; what we discover of mercy and grace in Christ should lead us to conceive of God as merciful, and gracious, and establish our faith and hope in, and fill us with gratitude to him, as the underived source of all good.

The teaching of Jesus made known the grace of God to men. He said nothing of his being sent to appease an angry God, to atone his wrath, and satisfy his justice, that it might become fit for him to show mercy; but in the most plain and direct terms he revealed the love, mercy and grace of God to the

world. He declared that it was in love the Father had given him; that he sent him, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He preached repentance and forgiveness of sins. He published glad tidings, concerning the good will of God to men, his readiness to pardon penitent sinners freely, and to bestow his favor upon all who would seek it. What he taught concerning the character of his Father, and his abounding mercy and grace to his creatures, has a direct tendency to lead sinners to look to the Almighty as a just God and Savior, and to trust in him for their whole salvation.

The spirit and conduct of Jesus illustrated his doctrine, and exhibited a fine imitation of the God of grace and mercy. His life was one continued scene of virtue and benevolence. He went about doing good. Misery, wherever he saw it, excited his compassion. He did not think the most abandoned characters beneath his notice; he attended to their case, and sought their reformation. His temper was most merciful and forgiving. He had enemies; they rendered him evil for good, and hatred for his love: but did he, in return, discover any thing vindictive, wrathful, or revengeful? No, he did not render evil for evil, nor railing for railing. View him in his approach to Jerusalem, a short time before his cruel death. He knew that in Jerusalem dwelt his most malignant and inveterate enemies: he was not a stranger to the cruel treatment he should shortly experience at their hands: he also under-

stood the dreadful calamities which would befal them. When he beheld the city, he felt the strongest emotions; but they were not emotions of anger and resentment: feelings of sympathy and compassion, while contemplating the impending destruction of his enemies, seemed to suspend in him, for the time, the consideration of their base and cruel treatment of him, and the shameful and excruciating death they would shortly inflict upon him; his whole soul seemed wrapt in sorrow on their account; his flowing tears, and pathetic lamentation, bespoke the commiseration he felt, and his tender mercy towards the vilest of men, even when those men were his most implacable enemies. Again, view him when suspended on the cross, in all the agonies of a most cruel death, surrounded by the taunts and reproaches of his brutal murderers. Did he in that distressing moment breath any resentment, or utter any imprecations? Nothing of the kind; but he prayed for his crucifiers with his dying breath. When raised from the dead he ordered a message of forgiveness to be published among the people who had so lately imbrued their hands in his guiltless blood. And is this the man who is placed before us as the image of the invisible God, whom men have so often described as wrathful, vindictive, and incapable of forgiving, unless he first receives satisfaction? If God be the infinite reality of what the merciful Jesus, in his teaching, spirit and conduct, is the image, his grace must be amply sufficient for our salvation, without our associating with it the popular notion of atone-

ment. To transfer our dependence from the Father to Christ, instead of being led by him to the Father, would imply that we thought more dependence could be placed on the image than on the reality which it is designed to make known.

It has been often said that the death of Christ was necessary to show the malignity of sin, and God's wrath and displeasure against it; but no such thing was ever intimated by Jesus and his Apostles; on the contrary his death is several times spoken of as manifesting the love of God: and it is hard to conceive how the same circumstance can manifest both wrath and love. As the death of Jesus confirmed his testimony of the truth and grace, love and mercy of God, it may properly be said to manifest his love in establishing the ground of our hope. The manner in which Christ suffered exhibited the victory and triumph of love over all the ignorance, folly, malice, rage, and wickedness of men; for all these operating against him, and venting their utmost fury upon him, in the treatment he received, could not excite a single emotion in him contrary to love, nor provoke him to the least unkindness, nor prevent his continuing to manifest love, even to his murderers. What could enable him thus patiently to suffer but the knowledge he had of his Father's love, and its influence upon his righteous soul? In this scene he appeared the son of the Father in love, the imitator, and so the image, of his love. Viewed in this light, by his death he gave the strongest confirmation of the love of God which he came to reveal.

Hence it appears that his death; so far from being set forth, in itself merely, as the only ground of hope to sinners, is a ground of hope to them only as it confirms the truth and grace, and displays the love of God, for their salvation.

3. The gospel reveals the free favor of God to men, and on that ground exhibits salvation and everlasting life.

The gospel proceeds entirely on the foundation of God's love to the world. It exhibits grace and mercy, salvation and everlasting life, as proceeding from his love. It represents Christ as the messenger of God, sent to reveal his truth and grace, to dispense salvation, and to conduct men to everlasting life. It contains every blessing, of a spiritual kind, that any of the children of men can need. Are they ignorant? it is sent to enlighten them. Are they wandering from God, in the crooked paths of iniquity? it invites them back to him, and assures them of his mercy on their return. Are they guilty? it teaches them that God forgives sins freely. Have they formed vicious habits, and lived in abominable practices? it presents every motive and influence, to the person who will seriously attend to it, that is calculated to destroy the power of sin, to produce new dispositions, and lead to new habits and practices. Are they ignorant of the will of God? it makes known his will in the most clear and perfect manner. Do they pant for more substantial enjoyment than this world can afford? it reveals to them all the riches of divine grace, all spiritual blessings. Are they affect-

ed with a sense of their mortality, with the gloomy prospect of lying down in the grave? it brings life and immortality to light; it points to the morn of the resurrection, and promises an endless state of blessedness and glory. In fact it is a system beginning with the infinite love of God, and terminating with the universal and permanent purity and happiness of the creation. In such a system what need or room can there be for the gloomy and ungracious doctrine of satisfaction? The revelation of a God, *of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things*, precludes the idea.

In the gospel every thing is free gift. Christ is the gift of God: the gospel itself a favor bestowed by him: forgiveness a blessing freely given: salvation is by grace, or through free favor: by a glorious display of divine favor sinners are accepted, and blessed with the adoption of sons: and eternal life is the gift of God. Where every thing comes in the way of free gift, and is bestowed as a favor, there can be no need, nor any room, to enquire who hath purchased this or that blessing for us? no price was demanded, no equivalent asked, no satisfaction required; the God of infinite love hath exhibited every thing we need as a free gift, by his son, in the gospel. Thus the doctrine of satisfaction is superseded, by a system of free grace, sinners have no need of it, the grace of God is sufficient for them.

4. Christ and his Apostles represented the salvation of sinners as effected by the grace of God.

This is strikingly illustrated by one of our Lords

parables, (Luke xv. 11-- 32,) that of the prodigal son. Like the prodigal, when men seek to be independent of God, and, following the impulses of appetite and passion, depart from him, however they may imagine that, by casting off the restraint of his paternal authority, and gratifying every sensual propensity, they shall gain their fill of pleasure, they soon find themselves plunged in guilt, shame, and misery. What is the unhappy creature to do when, like the prodigal, he comes to himself, when the moment of calm and serious reflection returns, and his eyes are opened to the wretchedness of the situation to which his vicious courses have reduced him? If he think of God as a wrathful, vindictive being, whose justice is too severe and unbending to accept of any thing short of perfect sinless obedience, he will be driven to the border, if not hurried into the gulf of despair: if an act of suicide, or a state of distraction, do not terminate a career of vice, such gloomy thoughts of the Almighty will be likely to imbitter all his days: unless he should happen to be persuaded of the truth of the notion of Christ's having made satisfaction for all his sins, and wrought out a perfect righteousness for him, in which case the anguish of his mind may be relieved, but the completion and permanency of his conversion from vice to strict virtue will be endangered. Nothing can afford him relief, or inspire him with hope, in a rational and consistent way, but the remembrance of his heavenly Father, with some just views of his true character, *against* whom he hath sinned.

Jesus does not represent the prodigal, when he came to himself, as thinking of his father as an angry, vindictive person, as unbending in his resentment, and not capable of showing compassion to his offending child, as standing upon his honor so far as to refuse forgiveness to his disobedient son till some one had made satisfaction for his crimes; though these are the ideas too often suggested to offending creatures when they begin to think seriously of God. But he represents the prodigal as still conceiving his father to be kind and liberal: this inspires him with hope and resolution to return. So when a sinner comes to serious reflection, and is sorry for his sins, it is the knowledge that God is still his Father, still kind and compassionate, that inspires him with the hope of forgiveness, and encourages him to cast himself upon his mercy. Jesus does not describe the wretched young man as entertaining a better opinion of his brother than of his father, and as thinking it necessary that he should go to the father on his behalf, to pacify his anger, and procure forgiveness for him; no more need the penitent suppose that it is necessary for some one to go to God on his behalf, to pacify his anger and procure forgiveness for him: he can seek to no being more merciful, more ready to forgive, and show him all possible favor than God.

When the prodigal is returning, Christ does not represent the father, as remaining unmoved, refusing to exercise any compassion, or paternal tenderness towards his unhappy child, until some one had in

terposed and offered an atonement for his follies: he brings in no third person, with an equivalent, or consideration, to move the father to be favorable to the young man, and procure his forgiveness; but describes the father as acting purely from the impulse of his own love and mercy, as running to meet the son while yet a great way off, and embracing and welcoming him home. He is described as forgiving his rebellious child freely, receiving him to his favor freely, and bestowing every blessing upon him freely. No consideration is implied, in the whole account, but the love of the father and the repentance of the offending son.

If this parable be illustrative of the way in which God saves sinners, it certainly teaches that they are saved by the divine free favor, without any other consideration but the repentance of the offender: it follows that a satisfaction to divine justice, or any equivalent given to God for their pardon, is totally out of the question.

In this manner did Jesus teach sinners the way of salvation. He called them to repentance, he encouraged them to believe the declarations of divine mercy, he taught them to view God as a Father ever compassionate and forgiving, that he would freely forgive all who asked forgiveness of him in a right disposition, and save all who sought for his salvation. *Ask*, saith he, *and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to*

The Apostle Paul taught that it is the grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men: and that those who enjoyed salvation were saved by his grace. He said nothing of salvation being procured by a satisfaction being made to justice, or that it was brought to men by a vicarious sacrifice: he ascribed it entirely to the free favor of God.

On the whole then it appears that the scripture doctrine is salvation by grace, not by contract, bargain, or a righteous person dying in the place and stead of the guilty: and that a vicarious sacrifice, or satisfaction for sins, never was either necessary, or admissible, in order to our being saved; seeing the free favor of God does every thing, from first to last, in the business. All that is necessary in order to sinners being saved is, for them to repent, turn from sin to God, cast themselves upon his free mercy, believe the declarations of the gospel, become obedient to the truth, and live in the daily imitation of Jesus Christ. Those who do these things need entertain no fears of their present and everlasting safety; for Christ will, as the dispenser of the divine favor to men, be found the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him: such may wait with confidence for the hope of immortality.

THE

ANTI-SATISFACTIONIST, &c.

PART THE SECOND.

CONTAINING

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THE

ANTI-SATISFACTIONIST, &c.

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER FIRST.

An enquiry concerning the doctrine of Atonement.

THE word atonement is capable of being understood in a sense very different to that in which it is now commonly taken. It seems to be purely of English origin: compounded of the words *at* and *one* with the termination *ment*. Its true ideal meaning seems to be the setting at one, or effecting a reunion, where any variance or distance has subsisted. It appears to be constructed the same, and to convey the same idea, as the word *reconcilement*, used by some of our old writers. Were the writers on atonement to retain the true ideal meaning of the word, and apply it to the reconciling of the world, or the bringing of the Gentiles nigh to God under the dispensation of the gospel, or the setting of sinners at one with God through the mediation of Christ; not the re-

conciling of God to the world, the appeasing of his wrath, and making satisfaction to his justice for the sins of men; we should not oppose their statement. But as words pass from one generation to another they sometimes acquire an arbitrary meaning, and at length convey ideas foreign to their true ideal sense: this seems to have been the case with the word atonement. It is now generally used to express a doctrine very opposite to every thing taught by Christ and his Apostles: hence, to avoid disputing about words, it seems necessary to refute error under the name which its advocates have applied to it.

It may be proper to enquire in what sense the word *atonement* is used in the Old Testament; especially as our opponents lay so much stress on the supposed vicarious nature of the jewish sacrifices.

The Hebrew word, *Copher*, translated atonement, includes the idea of covering.* So far as it had to do

* See PARKHURST's Hebrew and English Lexicon, and BATE's Critica Hebræa. It is applied to the substance with which Noah's ark was covered, also to the act of covering it. Gen. vi. 14. It is rendered *hoar frost*, Exod. xvi. 14. Job xxxviii. 29. Psa. cxlvii. 16. It is probable *hoar frost* might be called *Copher* from its being observed to lie on the ground like a covering. When *Copher* is translated *village*, as 1 Sam. vi. 18. Neh. vi. 2. the idea of a covering suggests itself, a *village* being a retired, sheltered place. When it is rendered *bribe*, as 1 Sam. xii. 3. Amos v. 12. the same idea is retained, a *bribe* being a covering, intended to blind the eyes. As a noun it is the Hebrew name of the mercy-seat, which was the lid or covering of the ark of the covenant. The idea of covering, in a figurative sense, may be attached to *Copher* when translated *atonement*, as what is forgiven is figuratively covered, and when sinners are cleansed from

with things of a moral nature, it seems to mean the covering of sin, by an act of pardon,* and a legal purification from it: or the bringing of the people nigh to take refuge in the divine mercy.† That the word could not be used, in the jewish law, to express a satisfaction made for sins, or something by which the Deity was placated, is evident from this circumstance, atonement was appointed to be made in cases of natural infirmity, or ceremonial uncleanness which certainly did not involve the idea of moral defilement. After child-birth the female was kept distant from the sanctuary, for a limited time, after which *atonement* was made for her; it cannot mean that she had incurred the displeasure of God by

sin, God will remember their iniquities no more against them, their sin is like a thing entirely covered, so as no more to appear, See Isa. i. 16, 17, 18. Ezek. 18 Chap.

* Psa. xxxii. 1. and Rom. iv. 7. The forgiving of sin is called covering it.

† That the Hebrew word *Copher* does not necessarily mean a price paid to justice, to exonerate the sinner from punishment, but that it relates rather to the exercise of divine mercy, appears from its being, as a noun, the name of the covering of the ark of the covenant, which our translators have, I believe, uniformly rendered *mercy-seat*: and it can hardly be supposed that it should have a clear different meaning when applied to the covering of the ark from what it has when applied to the jewish sacrifices, and to what the jewish priests did for the people, seeing these things were all closely connected, as parts of the same system of religion. That the translators understood *Copher* sometimes to mean mercy and forgiveness appears from the manner in which they rendered it in the following passages, Deut. xxi. 18. Chap. 32. 43. Jer. xviii. 23. Psa. lxxviii. 38. where we meet with the words, merciful, forgiven, forgave.

obeying his command, 'be fruitful and multiply,' and that a sacrifice was necessary to avert that displeasure, but an offering was presented as the mean of bringing her nigh and reuniting her to the congregation of the LORD after her separation. (Lev. 12. chap.) It was a mode of legal cleansing merely; for no moral pollution could be incurred by her separation. *Atonement* was also made for inanimate things; but these were incapable of moral defilement. An infected house was to be cleansed by *atonement* being made for it. (Lev. xiv. 53.) This ceremonial seems to have been intended to prevent the spread of contagion, and to show when the house needed no longer to be avoided; figuratively, to set it at one with the neighbourhood. Aaron was commanded to make an *atonement* for the holy sanctuary, for the tabernacle, and for the altar; (Lev. xvi. 33.) not that God was angry with these things, and a bleeding victim became necessary to appease his anger; but to denote that the sanctuary, tabernacle and altar were consecrated to God, that the people might regard them with one general feeling of piety. On the great day of *atonement*, under the law, the people of Israel were brought nigh before JEHOVAH, to express their penitence for sin, to take refuge in the divine mercy, and to renew the expression of their obedience. (Lev. 16 chap.) Without real penitence, confidence in the mercy of God, and obedience to his commands, all their sacrifices, and all that the priest could do for them, would have been useless.

One thing is very observable in the whole of what we read concerning *atonement* in the Old Testament; it is, that every part of the ceremonial was intended to fill the people with sentiments of piety and virtue, to stimulate them to devote themselves to God as a holy people: in other words to bring them nigh to him as his worshippers with a pious regard to his character and will. Indeed the true sense of making atonement for any person or thing, in the Old Testament, seems to be the making it, or him, *clean, or proper for the divine service.** But this is very different from the notion of satisfaction for sins.

It is contended by our opponents that, because, under the law, the forgiveness of sins was received by the offender, through the medium of a sacrifice, therefore the sacrifice was a satisfaction for the offence; but this is a false conclusion. The forgiveness of sins is now received through the medium of the gospel, which is called the word of reconciliation, because it reconciles, or brings the world nigh to God; but will any man say the gospel is a satisfaction for sins? Under the law the mercy of God

* See an excellent essay on the doctrine of atonement in the THEOLOGICAL REPOSOTORY, Vol. iii. P. 385, &c. The Hebrew word, *Copher*, translated atonement, frequently means either moral or ceremonial cleansing: and in this sense our translators have taken it in the following passages. 1 Sam. iii. 14. Isa. xxii. 7. & xxii. 14. & xxvii. 9. Ezek. xliii. 20, 26. Psa. lxv. 3. lxxix. 9. In these passages they have rendered it by the words *purge, and purged.*

was revealed through the medium of sacrifices; when the priest presented the offering of the penitent offender, and God accepted it, atonement was said to be made, and sin to be forgiven; because in this way the offender was restored to the privileges of jewish worship, and assured of the pardoning mercy of God. So now the mercy of God is revealed to us by Christ in the gospel, and confirmed to us by his death.

The English word atonement occurs but once in the New Testament, Rom. v. 11. *We also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.* I repeat that this is the only place in the New Testament where the word *atonement* can be found: and in this place it is not God, but man, who is said to receive it. If men still contend for what the Apostle speaks of, under the name of atonement, they should remember that it was not God, but man, that received atonement by Christ: consequently the manner in which he speaks of the subject, so far from giving the least countenance to their notion of atonement, destroys it. The only passage, in the apostolic writings, in which the word is found is against our opponents, as they suppose the *atonement* to be received by God, but that passage expressly mentions that it is received by the creature.

The Greek word, καταλλαγην, rendered atonement in the above passage, is never used by the LXX. in any passage relating to legal atonements: it is rendered reconciliation in several other places, in the New Tes-

tament: (see Rom. v. 10. & xi. 15.--1 Cor. vii. 11. 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20.) In the only passage in which it is rendered atonement, Rom. v. 11, the margin reads *reconciliation.* Several learned translators and expositors instead of *atonement* read *reconciliation.** The Latin versions read *reconciliationem,*† a term of the same meaning with our word reconciliation. Thus we have the testimony of a number of learned and pious men, of different parties among christians, that what is called *atonement* ought to be called reconciliation. It follows that the true christian doctrine is not that of *atonement*, as the word is commonly understood, but the doctrine *of reconciliation.*‡ It remains for us to examine this latter doctrine.

Good men have said much about Christ's having reconciled God to sinners; but it is in the nature of things impossible he should have done this, nor is the least hint of any thing of the kind to be found in the scriptures.

* See HAMMOND, WHITBY, DODDRIDGE, WAKEFIELD, and SCARLETT, on the place.

† See BEZA, MONTANUS, CASTALIO, and the VULGATE, in loc.

‡ The same may be said of the jewish atonements. They were not intended to placate the Deity, or make him merciful and gracious; for he was so naturally in and of himself, he had proclaimed his name to Moses 'The LORD God, merciful and gracious, &c.;' but to reconcile, or bring the jewish people near to God, to lead them to him, the fountain of mercy and pure goodness, for every blessing. The Hebrew word *Copher* is rendered *Reconcile*, and *Reconciliation*, in the following passages. Lev. vi. 30. & viii. 15. & xvi. 20. Ezek. xlv. 15, 17, 20. Dan. ix. 24.

On the face of the subject it appears manifestly absurd to suppose God could need reconciling to his creatures. Shall we say that the sins of men kindled a fire of wrath in the bosom of the *God of love*, turned his infinite benevolence to wormwood and gall; and that it was necessary that Christ should experience all the fierceness of his wrath, that he should drink up the wormwood and gall, in order to our being spared? that the *Father of mercies* brandished his flaming sword, and that nothing but his plunging it in the heart of his well beloved Son could prevent the destruction of his sinful creatures? that such was the nature of divine justice, so infinitely remote was it from every thing of mercy, that nothing but the blood of the innocent could satisfy it, and render it a just thing for the absolute sovereign of the universe to admit the penitent to favor? that the loving parent of mankind was so estranged from his offspring that nothing but the death of his Son, who always did those things which pleased him, could reconcile him to them; and that Christ by his death hath effected this reconciliation? Shall we say all this, and call it a scripture doctrine? No, nature shudders, and reason revolts, at such a representation, while the blessed gospel totally disavows it. As all the enmity and all the effects of sin are in and upon the creature, and extend not to God, it is reasonable to think all the reconciliation necessary is on the part of the creature.

Jehovah hath declared 'fury is not in me.' There can be no wrath in God for *he is love*: and there can be no wrath in love. If there be no wrath in God,

there could be nothing in him to appease; for love could need no appeasing.* God never hated any thing but sin; he never hated his creatures; nor does he hate sin less now than he did before Christ died, it is still the object of his utter abhorrence, and he hath threatened it with severer punishment under the gospel than he did under the law.

Reconciliation implies a change in the person who is reconciled; but God is an unchangeable being. Had he ever hated his creatures he must have eternally hated them. Had enmity to any part of mankind once existed in his mind there it must have always remained. Hence it cannot be true that Christ reconciled God to sinners; because he could not reconcile him without, in some sense, effecting a change in him, which is in the nature of things impossible.

* 'It appears sufficiently clear, that God is αυτοαγαθος, good in himself, originally such. This is an attribute or property of God, uncaused, self-originated, always in him, the same yesterday, to day, and for evermore. And if God was pleased so to order things, that the Christ in the fulness of times should come into the world, and reconcile the world to God, and bring all such as accepted the conditions of faith and obedience to happiness.—This might be done, and in fact was done, without making any alteration in him: without *making* him to *be*, or to *shew* himself *merciful* who was not in himself merciful before; but by making man the proper object of mercy, or duly qualified to receive mercy. And if God thought it fit that this should be all accomplished by means of *death*, even *the death of the cross*, it is easy to see how we have *Redemption through the blood of the cross*, without supposing that the death of our Savior made any alteration in the supreme governor of all.'

DR. A. A. SYKES.

If it can be ascertained that God once loved all his creatures, it will follow that he must have always loved them; because he is unchangeable. He certainly loved all mankind when he made them; for, as he never could derive any emolument from their existence, or injury or benefit from their conduct, nothing but pure benevolence could induce him to give them being, nothing else can induce him to preserve them. This fact, that God always loved mankind, and, being unchangeable, can never cease to love them, is a strong proof that nothing ever was necessary to be done to reconcile him to the world; for it would be manifestly absurd to talk of reconciling him to those towards whom he never felt the least enmity, but whom he always loved.

The doctrine of reconciliation is principally treated of in the writing of the Apostle Paul; and it relates not to Christ's having reconciled God to the world, but the world to God, by bringing the Gentiles under the dispensation of the gospel.

During the times of ignorance at which God winked, being without the divine oracles, not having the worship of the one living and true God established among them, but living in superstition and idolatry, the *Gentiles* were considered as enemies. Not being included in the covenant made with the seed of Jacob, nor reckoned as the people of God under the former dispensation, but being strangers and foreigners, there existed a contrast between them and the Jews; they were in an opposite state to the church of God; and their superstition placed them in the

light of enemies to the law and worship of the true God. The death of Christ having confirmed a dispensation of divine grace which comprehends the whole world, the Gentiles are said to be reconciled by his death: because no longer excluded from the privileges of God's people, being in this respect made fellow heirs, and of the same body with the Jews. Christ having, under this view, put an end to the distinction between Jew and Gentile, is said to have made both one, to have reconciled or included both in one body under the new dispensation. The Jews, by the peculiar dispensation they were under, were considered as in union with God, being his peculiar people, and a way of access to him was kept open to them by the institutions of the law; the Gentiles were shut out, no such way of access was open to them; but now, under the dispensation introduced by Christ, the way is opened for both to have an access to the Father. Hence it is said that we Gentiles have *now* received the reconciliation.

When the Jews put the word of God from them, the gospel dispensation, in the public ministration of it, was extended to the Gentiles. Thus the casting away of the Jews was the reconciling of the world. This reconciliation evidently relates to the Gentiles being manifestly brought under the new dispensation when the Jews rejected it.

The former dispensation was limited to one nation, it brought the Jews nigh to God in a peculiar relation and in the enjoyment of peculiar privileges; but the gospel knows no limitation, in it God ex-

tends his love, mercy, grace and salvation to the whole world. Hence it is said *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself:* bringing the world nigh to himself by placing them under the dispensation of Christ, which, in its aspect and tendency is equally favorable to all men.

Formerly the *Gentiles* were far off in a sense in which the *Jews* were *nigh:* the former were *without Christ, being aliens from the common wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:* the *latter* had God's anointed Prophets and Priests among them, the promise of Christ given to them, the covenants of promise, a revealed ground of hope, and God in the manifestations of himself among them. But *now* in Christ Jesus, the Gentiles, who were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ: i. e. in the dispensation which Christ sacrificed his life to introduce, and confirmed with his own blood. *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity,* (that which made the distinction and placed Jew and Gentile in opposition,) *even the law of commandments contained in ordinances, for to make in himself, of twain, one new man, so making peace. And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity* (abolished the Jewish ordinances) *thereby.* In these passages it is evident that by reconciliation the Apostle intended the Gentiles being placed, in com-

non with the Jews, under the dispensation of the gospel.

If instead of first adopting a prevailing opinion, and then seeking to make the language of scripture bend to it, which has frequently been the case, we carefully observe the facts stated in the New Testament, and follow the reasoning of the Apostles of Jesus, it will be ascertained that the reconciliation which Christ hath made, consists not in his having appeased the wrath of God, satisfied his justice and changed its aspect towards sinners, nor in his having reconciled him to the world, but that it consists in his having *brought the Gentiles nigh to God, by placing them under the dispensation of the gospel.* Consequently, the Gentiles are no longer without Christ. *He* is sent to them, with all the truth and grace which came by him, in the gospel. They are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow heirs of all the advantages of the gospel.

The Apostles intreated sinners to be personally reconciled to God—to his character, the methods of his grace, to his authority, and all the dealings of his hand—to avail themselves of the gracious dispensation under which God had placed them, by embracing his gospel, receiving his favor, and becoming obedient to his Son—to lay aside their enmity and cease from rebellion, by repenting, turning to God, and submitting themselves to his will. *We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

Such is the christian doctrine of reconciliation,

which has been mistaken for the modern doctrin
atonement. The former displays the great love
God to sinners, stamps the greatest importance
the ministration of Christ, as calculated and desi
ed to make the world pure and happy, and every
secures the good of the moral system. The latt
irreconcileable with the divine character, it g
the work of Christ an unimportant direction, by s
posing it designed, to effect some change in the
pect of divine justice, if not in God himself, wl
no change ever was either necessary or possible,
is inimical to the good of the moral system, as
substitutes an imaginary in the place of a real
personal righteousness.

CHAPTER SECOND.

A reply to MR. JERRAM'S LETTERS on Atonement, in a series of Letters to that Gentleman.

LETTER I.

SIR,

THAT christianity has 'certain leading principles, which are interwoven with its very texture,' and that these principles are in perfect unison with each other, I fully grant; but that the doctrine of *atonement*, as maintained by you, and other reputed Orthodox writers, is one of these leading principles, I deny, for the following reasons. 1. Nothing can be a leading principle of christianity that is not clearly laid down as such in the New Testament; but so far from this being the case, with respect to the popular doctrine of atonement, its advocates are necessitated to support it by inference and deduction. 2. It is not in unison with a grand leading princi-

ple of christianity, which is indeed interwoven with its very texture, *the salvation of sinners by the grace of God;* this principle you do not professedly deny, but it seems impossible to make your notion of atonement harmonize with it. You, however, take upon you to say that its being a leading principle of christianity 'has never been denied, except by those who have refined upon christianity, till it can scarcely be distinguished from a system of ethics.'* Thus, Sir, many great men, who have been the firm supporters of divine revelation, and benefitted the world by their labors, are by you placed under the censure of refining away the most material part of christianity.

As to 'the totally different aspect which a renunciation of it (the popular notion of atonement) has invariably given to the whole of the christian religion:' I beg leave to ask, has a renunciation of it given a less benevolent aspect to the character of God, or a less benign aspect to the doctrines of the gospel, or a less important aspect to the precepts and example of Jesus Christ, or changed the aspect of pure and undefiled religion as said by *James* to consist in a man's visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and in keeping himself unspotted from the world? It may be said indeed that it divests christianity of the gloomy and ungracious aspect it acquired in the dark ages, and restores the pure and heavenly aspect it had in the primitive times.

* Preface to Letters on Atonement.

That the fall of the popular doctrine of atonement ould pull down with it 'the very pillars of christi- ıity,' is a position incapable of proof. Do the [essiahship of Jesus, his divine mission, the truth of hat he taught, the reality of his miracles, the proof his resurrection, which things are certainly pillars christianity, all depend on the retention of this ctrine? certainly not. Why should christians be rified with the idea that if they suffer a pillar of ɔuted Orthodoxy to fall, the whole structure of ristianity will fall with it? Rather let them be formed that men have introduced many pillars in- the edifice erected by Christ and his Apostles, ıich deform the beautiful structure, and that the noval of them, so far from endangering, will add ength to the building.

I perceive nothing more in your preface, that re- ıires to be noticed; your uncandid and ungene- us reflections on those who differ from you, I pass er in silence, remembering that the servant of the ɔrd must not strive. Sincerely wishing you more ndor and christian charity,

I remain yours, &c.

LETTER II.

SIR,

YOU begin your first Letter with saying 'I am one of those who think some of the doctrines which you oppose essential to christianity,' I believe, Sir, this is what you and many other christians think; but, you will admit, that both you and they may be mistaken; you will admit that there have been times when many things have been thought essential to christianity which never made any part of it: may it not be so still in some instances? Is it not strange that a doctrine should be thought essential to christianity which is no where plainly expressed in the gospel, but which must be proved by inference? I submit to consideration, whether any doctrine which can be made out only by inference and deduction, even supposing it to be true, can be essential to christianity, or ought to be held a leading doctrine of the gospel? You have acknowledged that the word *satisfaction* is an unscriptural word, and can you deny that this unscriptural word is the most suitable term in our language to express the doctrine for which you contend? But is it not a little surprising that the Apostles of Christ should not make use of the most suitable words when expressing the essentials of christianity? Yet if the doctrine you defend be true they have not done this; for no word can be so proper to express satisfaction as the term

satisfaction; but you confess that word to be unscriptural. Yet you contend* that it is an essential and fundamental doctrine, and cannot be rejected without endangering our salvation.

The candid reader will judge whether you, Sir, have not attempted to make out your point, not by direct scriptural proof, but by inference, and by an arbitrary application of the words of scripture which say nothing of Christ's making satisfaction for sin, of his suffering punishment in the place of sinners, or of his giving an equivalent to God for his favor to mankind.

You say† that you 'make no profession of indifferentism respecting the truth or error' of the points on which we differ. Do you mean to charge your opponent with indifferentism? If so, you are requested to substantiate the charge. He believes that truth is of great importance, being calculated to produce those happy effects which error never can produce; had he thought otherwise he would have avoided this controversy. But, perhaps, you mean nothing more by indifferentism than strict impartiality, the entering upon the controversy without a previous determination to abide by the side of the question already espoused. If this be your meaning, your opponent openly professes such indifferentism. He has engaged in the controversy with a view to discover and promote truth, and care not on which side it is found, so that it be but found and

* Note 1. † P. 9.

followed: yea, he even thinks this kind of indifferentism is necessary to an impartial enquiry after truth; and that the man who is not so far indifferent as to stand prepared to admit evidence, and give it its full weight, on which ever side of the question it may appear, has no business with controversy. Yet this kind of indifferentism, or rather impartiality, is not indifference to truth, it is consistent with and results from the ardent love of truth.

After your saying* that you 'utterly disclaim the pretence of being indifferent on which side truth may be,' is it unfair to say, that you did not begin this controversy with a mind open to conviction, and prepared to receive truth wherever it might be found? To such unbiassed and impartial examination you do not pretend. But why should you not be impartial, Sir? Why, you say, 'As well might a man pretend to be indifferent about the issue of a questioned title to an estate, by which he has had the enjoyment, for many years, of great sums of money.' But, Sir, this is not a fair statement of the case, unless it can be proved that our title to salvation and everlasting life depends entirely upon the truth of the doctrine of satisfaction; but we deny that it has any dependence on it. We think the truth and grace which are come by Jesus Christ, the promises of God which are in him, yea, and in him, amen; as set forth by the gospel, and confirmed by his death, are the foundation of the sinner's hope, and of the enjoyments and

* P. 10.

prospect of the christian. Before you said that to doubt the popular doctrine of atonement, for a moment, would make you 'wretched indeed!' You should have proved that the truth of God is undeserving our credit, that his grace is not sufficient for us, that his promises are not a proper ground of dependence, that Christ hath not power to save us and raise us to future life and glory, unless that doctrine be true; for unless all this can be proved the doubting it need not disturb our happiness.

Again, you say, 'I have long been in the habit of coming to the father through the Son.' And do you suppose *anti-satisfactionists* are in the habit of coming to God in any other way? If you do, you are greatly mistaken. What, is there no possibility of coming to the father through the son, unless the notion of satisfaction be true? This requires some proof. We suppose we draw nigh to the father through the son when we view him as revealed to us by Christ, and approach him by the gospel.

Again, you say, 'I have built my hopes of heaven on having received forgiveness of sins, and free justification, by the redemption that is in Christ.' Do you mean to charge us with denying the forgiveness of sins, and free justification, through the redemption which is in Christ? If so we dare you to the proof; we do more, we challenge you to prove that there can be any such thing as forgiveness of sins, if the sinner escape punishment merely because all the punishment due to him has been inflicted on another in

his place and stead; or free justification, if the justification of the sinner was bought and paid for before he received it. You say further 'I have received all my comforts from the persuasion that God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, and I have often rejoiced in Christ Jesus, putting no confidence in the flesh, ascribing glory and dominion unto him that hath loved me, and washed me from my sins in his blood.' And can you suppose that we do not believe, as firmly as you, that God hath *set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood*, in the sense in which the Apostle used the words? If so you are called upon to prove it. If you consult Tindal, Hammond, Leigh, Whitby, and other learned and pious men, they will inform you, that Christ's being set forth as a propitiation, intends his being set forth as a mercy-seat: and surely the revelation of divine mercy to us by Christ does not necessarily imply his being a vicarious sacrifice. Do you suppose we cannot rejoice in Christ Jesus and cease from confidence in the flesh, however much we may rejoice in the truth and grace which came by him, in the great love of God commended to us by his death, and in the blessings we receive through his ministration, unless we rejoice in the supposition that all the wrath of God was poured out on him? Is the manifestation of the wrath, or the love of God, the ground of the christian's ...rt and rejoicing? Is it possible for you to ... we cannot ascribe glory and dominion to ...ving loved us and washed us from our

sins in his blood, unless we admit the notion of satisfaction for sin? What, was it no manifestation of love for Christ to die for our benefit, unless he died in our place and stead? Is it impossible for salvation to come to us through his blood, though he died to effect our deliverance, unless his death was a punishment inflicted on him as our substitute. Would it not have been better for you to have been quite explicit on these points? How can it serve your cause barely to quote passages of scripture which say nothing on the point in dispute? If you could bring a few plain and express proofs, from the sacred writings, it would be much more to the purpose. Wishing you to become more impartial in the investigation of religious subjects.

I remain yours, &c.

LETTER III.

SIR,

YOU seem much displeased that writers on our side should sometimes dare to refer to the original, when examining passages of scripture, and labor, by misconstruing a sentence in one of my letters, to

have it understood that I have engaged to make no reference of this kind:* yet writers on your side have referred to the original whenever they found it suited their purpose. What is it makes you so much afraid of a reference to the original languages of the scriptures? Why are you so much alarmed lest the errors of the common translation should be detected and made known? Errors I suppose you will acknowledge there are; though not such as affect the essentials of christianity. Do you think ignorance can be of any advantage to mankind? Cannot modern Orthodoxy be supported without a revival of the justly exploded maxim, which was a main prop of the Orthodoxy of the middle ages, that ignorance is the mother of devotion? Why should you depreciate biblical researches, and the critical examination of the words of the sacred penmen, by which the christian cause has been greatly promoted? Do you mean to censure all those men who, in their expositions of scripture, have introduced words from the originals, or given a new translation of particular passages? Because in so doing you would censure many of the most learned and pious among your orthodox brethren. Or is it only when such a practice is thought to endanger the reputed Orthodoxy of the day, that it is to be decried?

I have not yet discovered that the giving a correct statement of the sense of scripture, though learning and criticism be necessarily made use of, is some in-

* P. 11.

stances, is the way, as you seem so suppose, to make christians think lightly of the scriptures; I think the effect has been, and will continue to be, the direct contrary to what you apprehend; while, on the other hand, by a blind acquiescence in received opinions, and by the suffering, through timidity, or prejudice, the mistakes of translators and expositors to pass as indubitable, the scriptures have been brought into contempt in the eyes of many reflecting men, and they hurried into mere deism by being led to suppose, by what they have heard maintained as the doctrines of divine revelation, that the sacred writings cannot be reconciled with the known character and perfections of God. I mean not to dispute the point with you at present, whether the reputed Orthodox or Hetorodox of the present day, be best 'qualified to fix the meaning of a disputed Greek or Hebrew phrase,' it is enough that there are such phrases; for so long as that is the case, there cannot be too much learning and acumen employed in fixing their meaning; it being evident that learning is more likely to do it than ignorance and acumen than dulness.

I grant that in writing against the notion of satisfaction for sins, I 'have had continually in view the doctrine of atonement, as generally understood by what are called orthodox christians;' being fully convinced that, wherever the word atonement occurs in the scriptures, it means something as opposite to what reputed orthodox writers express by it as popish mystery is to rational christianity.

I had suggested the impropriety of christians calling one another by ugly names, and you charge me with acting contrary to my own advice in this particular,* because I called those who maintain the doctrine of satisfaction, *satisfactionists*. You ask, 'Why do you call your opponents *satisfactionists?*' Truly, Sir, because they are *satisfactionists*, i. e. persons holding the doctrine of satisfaction. I had no conception that my applying this term to them could give the least offence, especially as I called myself and those who agree with me *anti-satisfactionists*. I used these terms because it seemed the most concise and direct way of describing the persons who hold opposite opinions on the subject of satisfaction for sins, not conceiving either to be a term of reproach; but if either be, I should suppose the name which I have taken to myself, in the present controversy, would be thought the most reproachful by the reputed Orthodox of the present day. I really cannot comprehend how it can be calling persons '*ugly* names,' or any breach of christian charity, to speak of them in terms which best express their real sentiments. If the word *satisfactionist* be an '*ugly* name,' it must be because the notion of satisfaction is an ugly notion; the deformity must be in the thing, not in the application of an appropriate term to those who assert it. Do not you, Sir, maintain the doctrine of satisfaction? Do you not even suppose it to be essential to christianity? Does not the term

* P. 12.

tisfactionist simply mean one who believes the doc-
rine of satisfaction? Then, Sir, are not you a *sa-*
isfactionist? you cannot say you are not. Why then
re you so much displeased at being denominated
hat you really are? If 'all those who maintain a
octrine different from that which I support,' will
ot 'acknowledge the propriety of the term,' it must
e appropriate to all who maintain the notion of sa-
isfaction for sins. I do think 'that, in some way
r other, the word satisfaction,' or what it imports,
is essential to the doctrine I reason against.' I cer-
ainly have not reasoned 'merely against the propri-
ty of the *word;* but against the unscriptural doc-
rine which it has generally been used to express.
ou, Sir, seem ashamed of the *word*, and inclined
) let it go; but you cling fast to the *thing* which it
as been long and generally used to express. I hope
have said enough to show that I am not 'reprehen-
ible for stigmatizing my opponents with an obnox-
ous name;' a name which I certainly should never
ave applied to them, had I known that they were
hamed of it, or thought that it would give them
e least offence.

I feel as much averse as you can be to a dispute
erely about words, hence I shall allow you the word
onement in your own sense, after observing, once
n all, that I conceive your sense of it to be very
fferent from its true meaning as it occurs in the
ered writings: and you will understand me to mean,
hen reasoning against the doctrine of atonement,

that doctrine merely according to your views and explanation of it.

The heavy charge of misrepresentation, &c. which you bring against me,* you will find to be entirely unfounded, if you turn to another part of this work, (I.) and examine the extracts I have made from a number of respectable writers, on your side of the question.

I do certainly grant that the doctrine I maintain is, 'That God requires no consideration, or condition, but his own mercy,' as made known by the gospel, 'to pardon sinners, upon their repentance and faith. This doctrine you oppose; and undertake to defend the following: 'That God has thought it right to require, as a consideration or condition, in order to his pardoning the sins of mankind, something distinct from the repentance of the offender; and this consideration or condition, is the death of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

If I fully comprehend your meaning, I agree with you as to the point at issue. I suppose you use the words *consideration or condition* in a legal sense, i. e. to denote an equivalent, or something of value, required by God as the ground of his pardoning sinners. As if A. said to B. 'I have an estate which I can settle upon C. who is quite destitute; and, having a great regard for him, I am desirous of settling it upon him; but, as he has used me very ill, I cannot think of letting him have it, on any other considera-

* P. 13, 14, 15. I. Part i. Chap. i.

tion, or condition, than that of my first receiving an equivalent for it; now C. cannot offer this consideration, for he is in absolute poverty: if you will give me the price, he shall, for such valuable consideration, have the estate, if he will repent of his evil conduct, and receive it on such conditions.' This, Sir, is what I understand you to maintain; in opposition to which I assert that God receives no consideration for his favor to sinners, but that he *justifies them freely by his grace.* This seems to be the point at issue between us. I see not that you gain any thing by substituting the phrase *consideration or condition* in the place of the word *satisfaction;* for, though you have thought it convenient to change the terms, the thing contended for is evidently the same. I suppose you mean, that the consideration which God hath required, as the condition of his favor to sinners, is a satisfactory one; as much so as the consideration which a man requires for an estate is a satisfaction to him for the estate.

I remain yours, &c.

LETTER IV.

SIR,

I HAD said, *that neither Christ nor his Apostles taught the doctrine of satisfaction: not even on those occasions when it was most to be expected, if a doctrine of truth.* In reply to this you say, 'lst. That, though it should be granted that Christ did always pass over the subject in silence, yet no conclusion against this doctrine can thence be inferred.' I think, Sir, upon your own ground, such a conclusion ought to be thence inferred; for you suppose it to be a doctrine 'essential to christianity,—in which the very existence of all that is dear to us is involved.' If so, it ought not to rank among those things which Christ did not teach his disciples, while he was yet with them; nor even among those things which he did not preach to the jewish people. We find he not only taught, but that his disciples actually believed, the fundamental doctrines of christianity, before his death; for Peter made a confession of that truth upon which Jesus declared he would build his church, and in the knowledge of which he declared him blessed; though at the time, Peter did not understand that it would be necessary for Christ to die. Matt. xvi. 16—22. He said to the Jews, *If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins;* John, viii. 24. not, if ye believe not that I am to

give to God a consideration for the pardon of sin. I suppose, had they believed that he was the Christ, they would not have died in their sins, though they had known nothing of the doctrine of satisfaction; for what he taught was sufficient for their salvation; John, v. 34. *These things I say that ye might be saved.* Either, 1. Christ taught the doctrine of satisfaction; or, 2. he did not teach what was necessary to be known in order to his hearers becoming christians, and to their being saved; or, 3. the belief of the doctrine of satisfaction is not essential to christianity, nor necessary to salvation. You may take which of these positions you please; one of them I think you must acknowledge to be fact. It follows, that though 'the minds of his disciples were not then prepared to receive *all* the important doctrines which they should hereafter be taught,' this has nothing to do with the present subject; for they certainly were prepared to receive those doctrines which were essential to their becoming his disciples, and to their receiving salvation through his name. Whether I can 'tell why God did not unfold all his mind at once,' is one thing; but whether Christ omitted teaching 'a doctrine essential to christianity—in which the very existence of all that is dear to us is involved,' is another and a very different thing.

You reply 2ndly. "The discourses of our Lord do, as we think, certainly teach this doctrine."* To prove this you quote several passages from the evan-

* P. 17.

gelical history; but as they express nothing about satisfaction for sin, atonement to divine justice, or of the death of Christ being the consideration or condition which God required in order to his forgiving sins, your barely quoting them proves nothing.

I had said, *Had the making satisfaction for sin been that which most of all rendered his death necessary, surely the Savior would have said something on that point, when professedly showing his disciples why he ought to suffer; yet he passed it over in total silence.* And you, Sir, have not told us that he ever hinted at the subject on *that* important occasion; you have not attempted to answer this material part of my argument.

After all you have said* about the book of Acts, I think you must admit that we have, in that book, a faithful and sufficient account of what the Apostles preached; and, though I fully admit that 'the silence of one part of scripture on any subject, cannot reasonably be objected against a doctrine, if it be maintained in another,' still I must contend, that if the doctrine of satisfaction be 'essential to christianity,' if it be a doctrine 'in which the very existence of all that is dear to us is involved,' it is reasonable to expect the Apostles would not omit it when preaching to sinners. Did they not preach what is essential to christianity, in the discourses of which we have an account, for many became christians by hearing them? Surely, then, if what you

* P. 19, 20, 21.

contend for be essential to christianity, we ought to find it in those discourses.

The passages you have quoted as plainly implying the doctrine intended by the expressions 'vindictive justice' and 'satisfaction for sins,' contain no hint of the kind; they simply state that there is no other medium but Christ through which God communicates salvation to sinners—that he alone has authority to save them—and that all who believe his gospel receive forgiveness; but what has all this to do with *vindictive justice* and *satisfaction for sins?* The passage in which you seem to think these things most plainly taught, (ch. xx. 28.) speaks of GOD as the purchaser of the church; consequently if it import the giving a consideration to procure pardon for sinners, it imports that God gave the consideration; it remains for you to say to whom *he* gave it, and from whom he obtained pardon for his guilty creatures. Surely you will not say, that he gave a consideration to *himself* to obtain pardon of himself for sinners. At any rate this passage can have nothing to do with Christ's giving God a consideration for our deliverance. I know that what you quote are 'such passages as the persons (who maintain the doctrine of satisfaction) would think it proper to ground their arguments upon;' but this only serves to convince me of the weakness of their cause.

You acknowledge that the words *vindictive justice* and *satisfaction for sins* are not to be found in 'the whole of God's word;' yet from the frequent use of them by christians, as importing a leading doctrine

of revelation, we might expect to find them in almost every part of the bible.

On the whole, Sir, you seem to admit that apostolic preaching differed materially from that of the modern advocates for the doctrine of satisfaction. You say, 'It is possible that the Apostles might be treating on subjects which did not naturally lead to this doctrine;' yet they were addressing sinners on the things which related to their salvation. Is not this granting my argument?

I remain yours, &c.

LETTER V.

SIR,

IN attempting to set aside the second reason I assigned for rejecting the notion of satisfaction, you have not adduced any argument from scripture against it, nor attempted to show that my references to Job, xxxv. 6—8. Psalm, xvi. 2. are inapplicable, though both these things you ought to have done; but you satisfy yourself with making a distinction,* which, when applied to the Deity, is as

* P. 22.

ntrary to reason, as it is unfounded in scripture. aid, *Satisfaction demanded, implies injury received him who demands it, and a capability of receiving mpensation; but God is no more capable of receiving jury, than he is of doing injury, or than he is of re-iving benefit.* The premises from which I reason, ou say, you cannot admit, because 'I make no dis-nction between a person acting in an *individual* and an *official* character;' a distinction, Sir, which is tterly inapplicable to the Deity: for let him act in hatever relation he may, whether as a *Lawgiver* id *Judge*, or a *Father* and *Friend*, he always acts the absolutely infinite, all perfect, supreme and dependent God, and is utterly incapable of receiv-g injury, or advantage from his creatures, in any se whatever; to assert the contrary would be to de-y the absolute supremacy and independence of the *Most High.* ELIHU, in his address to JOB, is eating, not of the abstract nature of God; but of s divine government and providence, which must ecessarily comprehend his character as Lawgiver id Judge; yet he states that the conduct of crea-res can neither injure nor benefit *him.* In fact we ow nothing of the divine character but what is re-ve; consequently, to admit what you say, would to admit that we know nothing of it but what poses the Deity capable of receiving injury or be-fit. If a mortal man, the 'child of imperfection,' ose authority to legislate and judge is necessarily rived, and who is bound by some law superior to mself, cannot act purely from the dictates of his

individual mind, does it follow that God, who is the fountain of all law, authority, power and dominion, who has ever acted, and ever will act, of and from himself, who is superior to all law, and accountable to no one, must cease to act in his individual character when he legislates and judges?

In the third reason I gave for rejecting the above doctrine. which I founded on the divine character, you think me again 'in an error for want of making an important distinction. That the *sentiment* of love is a very different thing from the *expression* of that love.'* You have not however defined the difference: nor shown how we are to know any thing of the love of God but as he hath been pleased to express or manifest it. The expression of his love to sinners is as free and spontaneous as the sentiment of it in his infinite mind. What is the expression of love but the sentiment of love manifested? God needed no inducement in order to his manifesting his love to sinners. Had the advocates for the notion of satisfaction spoken of Christ and his death merely as a medium in which the love of God is manifested, I should not have opposed them, for it is my own sentiment; but that respectable writers among them, whether you believe it or not, have represented the subject in a very different light is manifest, from the quotations from their writings, in another part of this work:† yea, *you* have stated it in a different light, by speaking of the death of Christ as a consi-

* P. 23. † Part 1. Chap. i.

deration which God required, in order to his pardoning the sins of mankind; and you seem to think me in a great error for attempting to show 'that whatever obligations we are under to Christ, as the *medium*, by which all the blessings of grace and salvation are communicated to us, yet we are under none to him as paying the *consideration*.' * On this point you seem hardly consistent with yourself. The case of Zaleucus, the lawgiver of the Locrians, which you have quoted, is not at all in point; for we ought not to suppose that God is such an one as ourselves, or that our ways are his ways. If a mortal creature could not secure his own honor, (and no doubt Zaleucus thought his honor concerned in executing the penalty of the law,) and his son's eye, without maiming himself, it by no means follows that the absolute sovereign of the universe, who is possessed of infinite wisdom and power, and whose will is supreme law throughout the creation, can be brought into such a dilemma. Besides, for the case to have been in point, Zaleucus should have plucked out, not his own eye, but the eye of some innocent person: this, however, would have been called injustice and cruelty in an earthly governor. Are you not aware, Sir, that God hath sometimes rescinded his threatenings? What think you of the case of our first parents, of that of the Ninevites, and of what he declared by his prophet. Jer. xviii. 7, 8.?

* P. 47.

I had assigned as another reason why the doctrine of satisfaction ought to be rejected, that God is never said, in the sacred writings to forgive sins because he had received satisfaction; but he is said to forgive them because he delighteth in mercy. And you are constrained to acknowledge that satisfaction does not occur in this connexion;* you might have added nor yet the words atonement, equivalent, or consideration. You even venture to assert that 'the remission of sins is frequently mentioned in connexion with a *consideration*, on account of which it is pardoned, distinct from the mercy of God.' Than which no assertion can be more unfounded; unless you admit that the ignorance, weakness, or penitence of the sinner is the additional consideration. The passages you have quoted express no such idea as you contend for; and your barely quoting them is no proof: they barely mention the *medium* by which forgiveness is communicated, on the ground of the divine mercy.

Again, I had stated it as questionable whether the notion of satisfaction was compatible with God's forgiving sins, any more than an insolvent debtor's being set at liberty, when his surety had paid his debts, would be compatible with his creditor's forgiving him his debts freely. To this you object, because sin is a crime, and involves moral character;† though you are constrained to acknowledge that in one sense every sin is a debt: and if so he

* P. 24. † P. 26.

who bears the punishment pays the debt. It is certain Christ in his parables compared sins to debts, and the pardoning of them to the forgiveness of debts: and writers in general on your side have spoken of sin as a debt, and of the death of Christ as a payment of the debt. You labor hard to prove that sinners being pardoned on the ground of Christ's having been punished in their stead, does not detract from the freeness of pardon; but I must beg leave to say it seems to destroy the very idea of pardon; for when all the punishment is inflicted, no matter upon whom, whether the sinner or his substitute, the law has no more to inflict, consequently, nothing remains to forgive, the culprit may legally demand his liberty, as much as a debtor can when his debts are all paid. The ground you before took under this head you have abandoned, perhaps you may find that which you have now taken as untenable. Permit me to say, I think, you do no honor to the divine government, by supposing it driven to such an expedient, to support its dignity, as the law of God condemns, that of condemning and punishing the innocent. Consider, Sir, the government of God is not like those of men, its dignity and authority are not supported by *expedients;* but by the infinite perfections and supreme will of the ALMIGHTY.

I had argued that, *To say that God cannot forgive sins without first receiving satisfaction, seems to limit the divine sovereignty, as well as tie up the hands of infinite love and mercy.* To this you say 'I have anticipated the answer, (i. e.) *No, say satisfactionists,*

God cannot forgive unless his justice be first satisfied ;'* but surely you did not think this would be admitted as an answer to the argument ; it is rather a reply against the divine sovereignty, and as such I quoted it. Could you suppose we should suffer a confident assertion, in which the very thing in dispute is taken for granted, without the least shadow of proof, to pass for argument ? Besides, Sir, you have not done justice to my argument ; you have not taken the least notice of what immediately preceded the supposed anticipated answer, and to which it had immediate relation : i. e. *If God be the absolute sovereign of the universe, it must be a prerogative essential to him to exercise his love and mercy when, where, and how he pleaseth, to extend pardon to sinners according to his sovereign will.* It was to *this* I supposed my opponents to make the above reply. What made you entirely overlook this passage ? You could hardly help seeing that it formed a material part of my argument, and you have quoted the words before and after it. ' That God's sovereignty can never be at variance with his truth,' and that he can do nothing 'inconsistent with his own perfections,' I readily grant; but nothing is to be inferred from this in favor of your notion of atonement ; because it is contended, *that* notion is inconsistent with the truth and perfections of God.

You have taken for granted that ' When the scriptures speak of *laying on Christ the iniquity of us all,*'

* P. 27.

: meaning is 'that Christ suffered for sins as if he
l been the real offender;'* but this is the point in dis-
te, and you ought not to have taken it for granted.
well might you conclude that when the sins of the
ople of Israel were laid on the head of the scape
at he suffered as if he had been the real offender.
or can I help thinking, notwithstanding your as-
tion to the contrary, that you, Sir, 'speak in
onger language, of the imputation of guilt to Je-
s Christ,' than can be found in the scriptures; to
ove the contrary you have only to point out where,
the sacred writings, the imputation of guilt to
rist is mentioned; but be not offended that your
ferences are not admitted as divine truth. You
ink it 'consistent with the strictest justice, to ac-
pt of a *voluntary* offering in the place of another;'
e.) to accept of an innocent person to die in the
ace of the guilty; but this would be contrary to
r common conceptions of justice. P. has been
ilty of wilful murder, he is apprehended, and,
cording to law, ought to suffer for the crime; but
. comes forward and offers to be condemned and
ffer the penalty in the place of P. would an Eng-
h judge and jury consent to the condemnation and
ecution of Q. in the place and stead of P.? Would
t their doing so, though Q. was a volunteer in the
siness, be deemed a violation of law and justice in
y civilized nation? It is fully admitted 'that the
ecution of a just punishment is compatible with

* P. 28.

the divine attributes;' and, 'that it is one of the strongest evidences of divine wisdom and love, to maintain the dignity of his moral government.' But it by no means follows that to impute guilt to the innocent, and punish him for it, would be just. If it would be just for God to do this, how could it be proved unjust for men to imitate him by doing so likewise? You have not attempted to prove that the justice of God does *not* consist in doing that which is most right to be done by infinite wisdom and goodness.

I remain yours, &c.

LETTER VI.

SIR,

IN your reply to what I said concerning the law, you first attempt to prove that the law is a covenant of works;* then in the next page you acknowledge it to be a covenant of grace: by which means, I think, you have refuted yourself. For the law viewed as a covenant is *one*, and if *a mere covenant of works*, how could it ever be a covenant of

* P. 30.

grace? but you, Sir, acknowledge it to be a covenant of grace: the conclusion is unavoidable, it never was merely a covenant of works. I know not what authority you have to divide the law of Moses, as if he had given two distinct and independent laws, the one moral, the other ceremonial; Moses gave it, and the Prophets and Apostles speak of it, as one entire system. You will find a reply to your reasoning concerning the law in another part of this work.* I will only add here that, the Old Testament saints, no doubt, looked forward to Christ for the accomplishment of many of the promises; but that they knew that he was to be a sacrifice for sins does not appear. Abraham believed that in Christ all families of the earth would be blessed; this was revealed to him; but how could he know that he would be a sacrifice for sins, seeing this was not then revealed? He and all the faithful, before the coming of Christ, were justified by believing and obeying God; but it could not be by believing what was not revealed.

You have declared your belief 'that mercy is perfectly incompatible with *law*, considered in the abstract.† Are we then to suppose a merciful God gave an unmerciful law to his sinful creatures? However incompatible mercy may be with your notions of law, surely, Sir, it is not 'perfectly incompatible' with the law of God; for in it the exercise of divine mercy is expressly mentioned. Nor is it necessary the law, in order to the maintenance of its

* Part i. Chap. 2. † P. 31.

dignity, should preclude the exercise of mercy ; for it may punish some and show mercy to others, according to their different characters ; or it may mingle mercy with judgment in its treatment of the same persons ; or it may first punish and then display mercy. All these are cases capable of illustration from the Old Testament. Had you not supposed it impossible for the law both to punish and show mercy, your reasoning would have been different; but, whatever you may think, the law certainly contains promises as well as threatenings, mercy as well as judgment, life as well as death : and, under the ministration of it, God forgave the same people their iniquities and took vengeance on their inventions. (Psal. xcix. 8.) You think, Sir, the example I adduced, that *we are told in the decalogue of God's shewing mercy to thousands of generations*, does not support my position. Was not my position this, *the law knows something of mercy ?* and is not the mention made in the law, of mercy to thousands of generations, a proof that it knows something of mercy ? How then does it appear that this example does not support my position ? I admit 'that the mercy here promised is to the posterity of them that *fear* God and *keep* his commandments :' (i. e.) to the posterity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But how does this alter the case ? Have their posterity, throughout all their generations, feared God and kept his commandments ? The contrary is evidently the fact ; yet God hath continued his mercy to them. An Apostle tells us they are still beloved for

the fathers' sakes; and that God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon them all. Rom. xi. 28, 32. Notwithstanding their unbelief and punishment, God will show himself faithful, according to the declaration of his law, by showing them mercy to the latest generations.

You observe* that my 'argument against the sacrifices of the Jews being *vicarious*, because the law made no provision for a person whose life was forfeited, is a very singular one.' But, Sir, the case in which life was forfeited was the only possible one in which a *vicarious* sacrifice could take place; for if a man had not so far transgressed the law as to forfeit his life, the law could not require that another creature should die in his place and stead; and if he had so far transgressed the law as to forfeit his life, it did not admit of another creature's dying in his place; but required that he himself should be put to death. This, I think, fully proves, that the law did not admit of *vicarious* sacrifices.

Instead of fairly meeting my argument, that *the doctrine of satisfaction seems to strike at the foundation of the sytem of free grace and salvation, arising from the great love and rich mercy of the Deity;* you endeavor to elude the force of it, by observing† that if it apply against your system, it subverts ours, because we contend that no sinner can be saved without repentance. But, Sir, these are very dif-

* P. 32. † P. 33.

ferent cases. What you contend for implies that a substitute must bear the punishment due to the offender before he can be forgiven; what we contend for, respecting repentance, is, that men must depart from iniquity or God will not forgive but punish them; but sinners departing from iniquity in no wise affects the freeness of the forgiveness they receive for their past sins, it only implies that they must be in a proper state to enjoy the divine favor, or they cannot have it; whereas the notion of a vicarious sacrifice supposes that, however penitent the sinner, or however qualified to enjoy the divine favor, God would not cancel his sins unless an innocent person was punished in his place, and paid an equivalent for his salvation. My reasoning by no means implies that 'any *necessary condition* of salvation strikes at the foundation of its freeness;' but that the notion of its being bought, and paid for, strikes at its freeness. So far from *redemption through the blood of Christ* being the condition of our forgiveness, as you would have it understood, Paul, in the very passage you have quoted, Eph. i. 7. explains that redemption to be the forgiveness of sins; not something done to procure it.

The case you have supposed* is not in point; because for one man to become responsible for the good conduct of another, that no injury may arise from his having his liberty, is very different from one man's being hanged instead of another, to rescue

* P. 84.

him from the gallows. Truly, Sir, it does not surprise me that you can find no apposite similes to illustrate a doctrine which is contrary to reason and natural fitness.

The argument which I founded upon 1 Pet. i. 18, 21. You say, 'perhaps cannot be better answered than by quoting that passage:'* yet, Sir, that passage contains not the least hint of God's having received an equivalent as 'the *price* of redemption.' Have not you mistaken the nature of redemption? You seem to think it means God's giving us up to Christ, for a certain price, that he might have an opportunity of saving us; but if you re-examine, you may find that, throughout the scriptures, it means the actual deliverance of those who are said to be redeemed, from that to which they were in bondage. You will not say that sinners were in bondage to God, or that Christ redeemed them *from* God; yet this is what your argument requires. The above passage expresses that it was with the blood of Christ those who believed had been delivered; but it must mean from their former state, not from the hand of God. If 'the foundation of a sinner's hope lies upon an equivalent which God hath received at the hands of their substitute,' which is what you contend for, is it not evident, that *the foundation of hope for sinners is something out of and distinct from God, an equivalent which he is supposed to have received at the hands of their substitute?* This, Sir, is my argument, and, I think, you have unintentionally

* P. 35

granted it. The Apostle is not charged with any contradiction, by the admission of my argument; for he says nothing about God's receiving an equivalent for our salvation, and what he says excludes the idea. It is not just for you to charge the contradiction involved in your system upon the Apostle, by taking for granted that your creed is made from his writings.

In defending your system against the argument which I founded on our Lords parable of the creditor and debtors, you have abandoned the ground which you formerly chose, and adopted a new mode of eluding its force.* You suppose that 'in a parable borrowed from a mere pecuniary transaction,' it would have been improper to introduce any thing about satisfaction: yet you are constrained to admit that this parable 'admirably illustrates the readiness of God to forgive sinners;' but, if so, he forgives them freely without receiving any equivalent; for the parable represents the creditor as forgiving his debtors freely without receiving any payment. I think, Sir, your admission establishes my argument. As to repentance not being introduced, you have admitted that the construction of the parable precluded the mention of it; you have, consequently, removed the difficulty which you raised respecting its omission: and you will not say that the construction of the parable militates in the least against the necessity of repentance; but we contend that its very

* P. 36.

construction is fatal to your notion of atonement; for if that notion be true the parable ceases to be 'admirably illustrative' of God's method of forgiving sinners.

The passages you have quoted,* to prove that Christ bought and paid for the power of forgiving sins, are not at all to your purpose, as they contain not the slightest hint of the kind; and you barely quote them; consequently the conclusion you build upon them is totally unfounded.

I had argued that the notion of Christ's having made satisfaction for sins was inconsistent with the idea of future punishment. In this you think I err, 'by confounding a *sufficient* with an *efficient* cause, and satisfaction in a case of *debt* with one in case of crime.'† But give me leave to say that it is your system, and its advocates, have confounded these things; by supposing that one man might bear the punishment and satisfy for the sins of another, just as one man might bear the pecuniary fine and discharge the debts of another. 'Allowing the atonement of Christ to have made satisfaction *sufficient* for the whole world,' it must be, according to your views, by the effects of their crimes being transferred to him, and his being punished in their place; nor will you say that the repentance and faith of the sinner add any thing to this satisfaction: it follows that, justice being perfectly satisfied, this *sufficient* ought to be an *efficient* cause, so far, at least, as to indem-

* P. 37. † P. 38.

nify the whole world from punishment. Satisfaction for crimes ought to exempt from punishment, as much as the payment of a debt exempts from its being legally claimed of the person who had contracted it. If the sins of men be as completely atoned for, before they repent and believe as after, and that 'not on the ground of of repentance or faith foreseen,' and none be exempted from punishment but on the ground of this atonement, why should the impenitent and unbelieving be punished, any more than the penitent and believing, seeing Christ made as much atonement for the one as for the other? The passages you have quoted,* respecting the people of Israel, to help you out of this difficulty, can afford you no assistance till you have proved that the jewish sacrifices were vicarious.

I remain yours, &c.

* P. 39.

LETTER VII.

SIR,

I HAD argued that the particle *for*, as connected with the death of Christ, does not necessarily nply substitution; and, though you call my argument a quibble upon the word *for*, yet you acknowdge that 'this particle *may* be, and frequently *is* sed in a sense that will not admit of substitution.'* y which you have, in fact, granted my argument. dmitting, that it may sometimes be used to express hat is done in the place of another, yet this is not ecessarily its import, it follows that this may not e its import as connected with the death of Christ. here is one thing in my argument which you have ot thought fit to notice, it is this: *If Christ's dying or us, means his dying in our place and stead, how mes it to pass that we die also?* I think you ought o have said something in reply to this question. Tor have you assigned any reason why the word *for* ould imply substitution when connected with the eath of Jesus, and yet substitution not be implied hen it is connected with his resurrection, entrance nto heaven, and appearance in the presence of God. erhaps you thought the shortest way was to call the hole 'a quibble upon the word *for*.'

* P. 40.

The reason why the things said of Christ, in the passages you quote,* are not said of the saints, is, not because his death was vicarious, but because God hath called him to an office, and work, which he alone is qualified to fulfil, to reveal his truth and grace to a guilty world, and deliver them from sin and its effects. 'The grand reason why we are not said to be redeemed by the blood of the Apostles, of Stephen, or the Martyrs, is because they were none of them the Messiah, nor the person whom God had chosen to be the head of the New Dispensation; none of them were appointed to be the only way of access to God; none of them were appointed High Priests over the house of God.'† I cannot see that the passages you mention are in the least at variance with my argument, or that the quotation of them is more than sufficient to answer it: I think, before you made such a conclusion, you should have shown that they, at least, implied substitution. *Paul*, declares his readines to be *offered up;* (2 Tim. iv. 6.) to be *offered* upon the *sacrifice* and service of christians; (Phil. ii. 17.) of his enduring all things *for* the elect sake, that they might obtain salvation; (2 Tim. ii. 10.) of his tribulation *for* the saints; (Eph. iii. 13.) of his filling up, by his sufferings *for* christians, that which was behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh *for* his bodies sake, the church, (Col. i. 24.) Christians are represented as being ready to die *for*

* P. 41, 42.

† EATON's *Letters addressed to the* REV. JOHN GRAHAM.

Christ, and as rejoicing in tribulation *for* his name's sake, (Acts v. 41. ix. 16. xv. 26. xxi. 13.) As Christ is said to have suffered *for* us, so christians are said to suffer *for* him. (Phil. i. 29. 2 Cor. xii. 10.) *Paul* speaks of some who were ready to die *for* him. (Rom. xvi. 4.) Christians are called to imitate Christ in his sufferings; (1 Pet. ii. 21. iv. 1.) and to lay down their lives *for* the brethren, because he laid down his life for us. (1 John iii. 16.) Now, Sir, my argument is, that its being said *Christ suffered for us, died for us, &c.* by no means proves that his death was vicarious; because the same forms of expression are applied to christians: and, I think, it is fully supported by the above passages of scripture.

I had stated *that, as all that Christ did and suffered was in obedience to his Father, and could not be omitted without a violation of his duty to his Father, he could neither act nor suffer in the place of others.* This is the substance of my argument: and in order to meet it you have been forced to take two things for granted.* First, that Christ was under no obligations, nor owed any obedience, personally, on his own account to God. This is a totally unfounded supposition, and directly contrary to scripture. Without stopping now to enquire whether Christ be human, or super-human, without the least hesitation I assert, that whatever he is, or possesses, he uni-

* P. 42, 43, 44.

formly ascribes the whole to the gift of the Father: consequently, as he hath derived all from *his* God and Father, he must owe him all the obedience he is capable of performing: and unless you can disprove this, you must, according to your own reasoning, acknowledge my argument to be weighty. Christ and his Apostles ascribed his existence, John v. 36. vi. 57. Acts iii. 26, his knowledge, John viii. 26, 28. xv. 15. his ability, Acts x. 38. John v. 19, 30. xiv, 10, his words, John xiv. 24, his works, John iv. 34. v. 36. xvii. 4. Acts ii. 22, and all that he possesseth, John iii. 35. xiii. 3. Matt. xi. 27. Heb. i. 2, to the Father. Your hypothesis requires that Christ be absolutely independent of, and derive nothing from the Father; yet he ascribed every thing to him, and never arrogated any thing to himself independent of him. It follows that he owed constant obedience, to the utmost of his knowledge and ability, whether in doing or suffering, to the will of his Father. He said he came not to do his own will, but the will of his God; and all that he did and suffered is called obedience. Phil. ii. 8. How then could he go beyond his duty to God? How could he perform works of supererogation? And on what ground is the doctrine of merit to be placed? You have not told us where the scriptures speak of Christ's having 'assumed a character which he was not compelled by duty to do;' I conceive for very obvious reasons; because they no where speak of any such thing: yet you confidently assert and reason from *it as an* undoubted fact. That which God doth not

require cannot be obedience to him; but all that Christ did and suffered is, in the New Testament, called obedience to God; consequently all that he did and suffered was *required* of him. Yet *you* venture to assert, 'As nothing could be *required* of him, all he did was gratuitous and meritorious.' Here, Sir, you will excuse my saying, you build your conclusion upon a mere unfounded supposition.

Secondly, you are under the necessity of supposing, that Christ's sufferings and death became obedience, because he laid himself under an obligation, by a 'stipulated agreement' to suffer and die as the substitute of sinners. But as you make no attempt to prove this supposition, and it derives not the least countenance from the sacred writings, what you build upon it is a 'baseless fabric.' Weak indeed must that cause be which can only be supported by taken for granted suppositions contrary to both reason and scripture.

You seem to think it inconsistent with the justice and goodness of God to inflict such severe suffering on a Son who had never offended him, unless the sufferings he endured were the penalty of our sins. Here you take for granted that the sufferings of Christ were inflicted by his Father; but the Apostles always spoke of them as inflicted by wicked men. It is granted that his Father commanded him to suffer without resistance, that he placed him in such a situation as exposed him to all his sufferings, and that he designed he should suffer all that wicked men might inflict upon him; but this is very different to

his inflicting such sufferings upon him, and in such a way, as you suppose. Again, your reasoning implies, that sufferings always suppose a proportional degree of sin, either personal or imputed, consequently, *Job*, being the most afflicted, should have been the most wicked man in his day, but he was the most perfect and upright; Jeremiah should have been the most sinful of all the Jews; for he said, 'behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow;' those Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices should have been sinners above all the Galileans, and those eighteen on whom the tower of Siloam fell, sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem; but Jesus asserted the contrary. Luke xiii. 3, 5. It is agreeable to the scriptures to say, that God called his son who never offended him to suffer because his sufferings were necessary to complete his testimony, to make him perfect, and to qualify him for the exalted station he was destined to fill. If, as we are expressly told, Heb. ii. 10. Christ was made perfect through sufferings, his sufferings were necessary to make him perfect; and, if necessary to make him perfect, it was consistent with the justice and goodness of God for him to be subjected to them. Many creatures suffer who cannot have 'the most distant connexion with *moral* evil,' as they are entirely without moral consciousness. Will you reconcile the sufferings of the various classes of animals with the divine justice and goodness by saying that they suffer in consequence of sin being im-

puted to *them?* Truly, Sir, your reasoning seems to clash with scripture, reason, and undeniable facts.

You contend that 'Though it would be right for a creditor, in some cases, to forgive his debtor; yet it would not thence follow, that a judge has the power of dispensing pardon to condemned criminals, which is the relation in which sinners stand towards God.'* This may be true of an earthly judge, who is subordinate to the law; but it cannot be true of God, to whose supreme will the divine law owes its existence. It strikes me that your reasoning limits the power of the Almighty, and looks like arraigning him at your bar, and prohibiting his exercising an authority beyond what is possessed by mortals acting in a judicial capacity; be not offended, Sir, if I remind you of the reproof which he gave to those of old who thought he was altogether such an one as themselves. Psalm l. 21. Will you insult your Maker, and limit his divine prerogative, as absolute sovereign of the universe, by saying, that he has not as complete a power, as unquestionable a right, to forgive sins as *freely* as any creditor forgives a debt? The reader will judge whether this be not implied in the above passage. If sinners be condemned criminals, as you suppose, and God, who is the supreme judge of all, cannot dispense pardon to them, how are they to be forgiven? Can you be ignorant that the character in which Christ hath revealed God to men is not that of an unforgiving judge, but of a

* P. 45.

loving and merciful Father; that he brought not his metaphors to illustrate the divine conduct towards sinners from earthly tribunals, but from the tenderest sympathies and kindest emotions of the paternal breast.

All that you have said about the different degrees of offences, by no means affects the argument; for you are constrained to acknowledge 'That we ought to manifest the same willingness to forgive an offending brother as God does to forgive us.' To make good your point, you should have proved that we ought to manifest a greater willingness to forgive than God does; unless you can prove that he cannot do whatever he will. If you admit that God was willing to forgive without a satisfaction, you must either say that he had not power to act according to his will, or grant he could have forgiven sins without a satisfaction. If you say he was unwilling to forgive without receiving a satisfaction for sins, then, according to your views, the christian, who requires nothing of the kind, is more ready to forgive than God. If you say God was willing to forgive without exacting the penalty of sin, but that it would have been unjust for him to have done it, then you, in fact, say God was willing to have done what, according to your reasoning, would have been unjust. I leave you to free yourself from these difficulties in the best manner you can. As to *repentance*, that, in every case, is a condition implied in the forgiveness of sins.

I perceive nothing more, in your First Letter, to which a reply seems necessary.

I remain yours, &c.

LETTER VIII.

SIR,

IN your Second Letter you endeavor to establish the notion of *satisfaction for sin*, under the more plausible name of 'The Doctrine of Atonement, as it is generally received by what are called orthodox christians.' In your first Letter you let the *word satisfaction* drop, though you cling fast to the *thing*, and substitute the phrase *a consideration* in its place; In your second this latter phrase is also laid aside, and the same *thing* is contended for under another name; but, however you may vary the language, it is clear satisfaction for sin is what you contend for throughout.

You have merely brought together a number of detached passages of scripture,* and, in an arbitrary way, built upon them the notion that Christ died

* P. 48, 49, 50, 51 52.

'in the place of the unjust,' 'that he suffered in our place and stead.' If this be a legitimate way of proving a doctrine any doctrine may be proved from the scriptures: every dogmatist may bring together an hundred detached passages, without regarding their connexion, make an arbitrary conclusion from them, however unfounded, and take for granted that he has proved his point. This mode of proving requires very little thought, reflection, or reasoning; a concordance, to find the passages, seems all that is necessary. To examine one passage closely, show its meaning by a general view of the context, by comparing it with other parts of scripture, and by a patient examination of the subject to which it relates, would require more study and labor, than to bring together five hundred detached passages in the manner you have done. That you, Sir, who profess to be such an adept in criticism, should think you could prove your point by filling page after page with detached passages of scripture, is more than a little surprising. If a gentleman of the law was to attempt to prove the point he wished to establish in the same way, by quoting an hundred detached sentences, or parts of sentences from as many different law books; and then conclude that his point was proved; would he not raise a smile in the court? That Christ died *for* the unjust I readily grant; but that he died *in the place and stead* of the unjust is not said in any of the texts you have quoted, nor any where else in the scriptures: hence, after all the pains you have taken to prove your point, instead of showing it to be

a fact, you are forced to leave it merely as an inference. I might easily present the reader with as many detached passages of scripture in favor of our side of the question, as you have done of yours ; but what would be the use of doing this, unless I proved that the passages, taken in their connexion, clearly expressed the thing which I brought them to establish.

You found the notion of Christ's suffering and dying in our place and stead, not indeed upon the bare sound of words, for you have not even *that* in favor of your opinion, but upon detached passages of scripture, without giving yourself the trouble of showing that though the passages quoted express no such thing, yet that what they express amounts to it; without troubling your readers with an examination of any one of them; without a single reference to context, or one solitary remark on the construction or necessary import of a single text quoted.— Could you think, Sir, your readers would be so credulous, or that what *you* said would have so much weight with them, that they would admit the scriptures to mean what they no where express, merely because you quoted a number of passages, and tacked to them the notion of satisfaction for sins? And is this the best kind of proof of which your doctrine is capable? A roman Catholic can bring detached passages of scripture in favor of the doctrine of transubstantion, and even the sound of the words would be in his favor ; but the sense, when the passages are examined, would be against him ; this you will

admit: and it ought to teach us the absurdity of building doctrines upon detached passages of scripture.

Instead of attempting to refute my 'interpretation' of the texts on which you build your hypothesis, though you had said* that my interpretation of such passages would hereafter come under discussion, and though you grant, † 'that these passages *may admit* of a different interpretation,' you content yourself with appealing 'to the common sense of the candid reader,' without venturing on the discussion you had before mentioned, or giving any proof that my interpretation is a 'perversion of art and sophistry;' though it appears you wished to have it so viewed.

You say,‡ 'Would not the conclusion which an *indifferent* person, without the aid of criticism, would draw from them (the texts quoted) be, that Jesus Christ suffered death in the place and stead of the sinner; and that, on this account, all the blessings of the gospel, such as pardon, justification, sanctification, and salvation are bestowed upon the believer?' This, Sir, is begging the question: and is it not a little extraordinary, that, after speaking in such strong terms of the absurdity 'of being indifferent on which side truth may be,' you should feel yourself necessitated to appeal to the conclusion which an indifferent person would make? But do you mean the indifferent person should draw his conclusion from the detached passages you have brought together merely,

* P. 21. † P. 54. ‡ P. 53.

or from an examination of the scriptures at large on the subject, and a careful attention to each particular passage in the connexion in which it stands in the Bible? If you mean the former, I hardly think he would conclude that the death of Christ was properly vicarious, and that he gave God an equivalent for all the blessings of the gospel; because no such thing is expressed in those passages, but something very different is expressed, namely, the *grace of God*, the *pardon of sin*, and *free justification by grace*. But suppose his conclusion should be favorable to your hypothesis, you would gain nothing more than a roman Catholic might gain in favor of his notion of *transubstantiation* in the same way. If the detached passages on which he builds that doctrine were brought together, and an indifferent person left to judge from them merely, taken in their most literal sense, would he not conclude that transubstantiation was taught in scripture, however absurd and erroneous he might think the doctrine itself? But if you mean that the indifferent person should draw his conclusion from the scriptures at large, and a careful examination of each particular passage in its connexion, I am fully persuaded the conclusion would be very different from what you suppose; for, I think 'a man of plain sense,' who derived all his views of religious subjects solely from the Bible, would be so impressed with the evidence of the doctrine of free forgiveness, and free salvation, as taught by the Apostles; and perceive so clearly that the gospel is a system of divine favor, that he never could suppose

that God exacted full damages of Christ, on behalf of sinners, and received a price at his hand for every blessing he bestows. You have declared yourself not to be an indifferent person, consequently you cannot know, from what passes in your own mind, to what conclusion the texts you have quoted would lead such an one. The notions for which you contend are among the things which youth in general are taught, who receive any religious education: hence it is difficult to find persons who are indifferent on which side truth is to be found, unless they be persons who have risen superior to the prejudices of education, or those whom you would deem heterodox. You cannot be ignorant that a strong prejudice exists among the professors of the gospel in favor of your side of the question—so strong that many will not even hear any thing on the other side; it is probable some of these will think themselves the men of plain sense to whom you appeal. Have you not, in this Letter, adopted a method of deciding points in religion, which is calculated to strengthen old prejudices, and discourage a free and deep examination of scripture; by endeavoring to persuade the reader that the opinions which are founded upon a superficial view of detached passages, are more likely to be true than those which are the result of much diligent search and deep thought? This is contrary to the advice of Solomon; he exhorts us to *search for wisdom as hidden treasure.* A superficial view of things may be most favorable to the cause of modern orthodoxy; but a close examination of scripture

will ever be most conducive to the discovery of truth. I fully admit that 'common sense is a sufficient qualification for understanding the essential doctrines of the Bible;' but it is very evident, common sense is not a sufficient qualification for understanding many of the doctrines of modern orthodoxy.

Whether the jewish sacrifices were vicarious, consequently whether a Jew would understand passages in the New Testament as you suppose he must understand them, will be considered when I come to your next Letter.

You argue,* because sacrifices were familiar to the *Gentiles*, 'and constituted the principal part of their idolatrous worship,—nothing would be more natural for those who had been accustomed to consider what they offered to the gods as appeasing their anger for their neglect of duty, or commission of sin, than to understand the mention of sacrifices as conveying the idea of atonement and expiation.' Had the writers of the New Testament expressed themselves as some modern orthodox writers have done, I suppose this might have been the case, they might have been led to suppose the true God to be a wrathful, vindictive being, like the objects of their idolatrous worship, and that a sacrifice was necessary to appease his wrath, and make him 'well-willing' towards them; but as the former have said nothing in their writings concerning God's being wrathful,

* P. 57.

but declared him to be love, nor ever intimated that the death of Christ was necessary to appease his wrath, but declared him to be the messenger of the Father's grace, and his death the fullest confirmation of his love, it would be quite unnatural for a *Gentile* to infer that the God of christians was an angry Being, like some of the Heathen Deities, and that the death of Christ had the same idea associated with it as their idolatrous sacrifices. Besides, if the *Gentiles* would naturally understand your view of atonement and expiation as conveyed by the mention of sacrifices, would they not suppose that when themselves were called to offer sacrifices as christians (see Rom. xii. 1. Phil. iv. 9. 1 Pet. ii. 5.) they were called to make atonement for sin ?

What you say in the next paragraph respecting the antiquity of your interpretation of the passages you have quoted, and its being received by the great mass of pious christians, is no more than a roman Catholic would say in defence of many things in the church of Rome, which you reject. But, I believe your views of atonement, however generally received in modern times, have no claim to the high antiquity you boast. With respect to my having formerly believed the doctrine I now oppose, I fully admit it. I, like many others, received that and other popular notions, which I had heard taught, or met with in religious books, without due examination; and afterwards, when, on close examination, I found them inconsistent with the scriptures, I renounced them. But this is no proof that I should ever have

believed the doctrine of satisfaction, if, from the first, my views of religious subjects had been derived solely from the scriptures.

Throughout this Letter you show yourself greatly afraid of a critical examination of the scriptures, and of subjects being strictly scrutinised. This fear is, I think, very natural in an advocate for reputed Orthodoxy.

These remarks I think a sufficient reply to your Second Letter.

I remain yours, &c.

LETTER IX.

SIR,

IN your third Letter you attempt to support the notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sin, by proofs adduced 'from the nature of the Jewish sacrifices and priesthood.' Had you first proved, that the Jewish sacrifices were vicarious; that when the Jewish priests bare the iniquity of the congregation, to make an atonement for them before the LORD, (Lev. x. 17,) the guilt of the congregation was imputed to the priests, and all the punishment due to

the people inflicted on them ; and that when the sins of the people of Israel were all said to be laid on the *scape goat*, it meant that all their guilt was charged on him, and all the punishment due to them inflicted on him : I say, had you first proved these things, you would have done something to the purpose ; you would then have had some ground for your conclusions : but this you have not attempted, for very obvious reasons. Desirous as you are that it should be taken for granted that the Jewish sacrifices were vicarious, you have done nothing towards proving it ; but, till that be proved, all the inferences you adduce from it, which you are anxious should be taken for proofs, stand for nothing : the superstructure you erect, on such an imaginary foundation, is but a baseless fabric, and must fall.

I have before stated, that the only case in which a vicarious sacrifice could have been possible, was that in which the law admitted of no sacrifice. Your asserting 'that there is no weight in this argument,' and calling it 'an exception to a general rule,' is no refutation of it. It is, Sir, merely turning aside from the point, to avoid the force of the argument. So far from the above being 'an exception to a general rule,' *it* was a general rule under the law. It was only when life was forfeited by the transgression of the law that substitution could take place, and a vicarious sacrifice be offered. There could be no occasion, nor any room, for another creature to be substituted in the place of the sinner, and to die in his stead, unless the sinner himself was condemned to

lie by the law; for, though another creature died for him, unless it died to save him from being put to death by the sentence of the law, it could not be said to be substituted in his place, and to die in his stead; but when a man had so far sinned, that the law demanded his life, it admitted of no sacrifice to be offered on his behalf: hence the conclusion seems unavoidable, the law knew nothing of vicarious sacrifices. When David had been guilty of capital offences against the law, he knew there was no sacrifice appointed to be offered in such a case; he cast himself on the free mercy of God, and on the ground of free mercy, not of another creature dying in his place and stead, he was pardoned. Until you can refute the above argument all the inferences you may make from the phraseology of scripture, respecting Jewish sacrifices, will prove nothing in favor of the doctrine of satisfaction.

I conceive much of your reasoning is founded on a wrong notion of Jewish sacrifices, and a misconception of the language of scripture respecting them; but, so far as they have to do with the question at issue, the matter lies in narrow compass; either they were vicarious, or they were not so. If they were vicarious, you can give proof from scripture, that when the law had condemned a man to die, it accepted of another creature to die in his place and stead. If you can produce no such proof, it will follow that they were not vicarious; and if they were not so, no proof can be adduced from them in sup-

port of the notion that the death of Christ was vicarious. If it be clear that the Jewish sacrifices were not vicarious, and I think it is, it will follow that the death of Christ was not vicarious; because you, Sir, will admit that the forms of expression, applied to his death, are by no means stronger than those applied to the former sacrifices. Unless you can prove that the Jewish sacrifices were vicarious, the parallel you have attempted to make out between them and Christ will help to overturn what you are so anxious to establish. You say* 'Whether the sacrifices of the Jews were strictly vicarious in your sense of the word, or not, is not material to my argument. If it can be shewn that, *whenever they were required, they were the consideration and condition of pardon, something without which the offender could not be acquited,* it is all I now contend for.' Thus, as if sensible of the impossibility of proving that the Jewish sacrifices were strictly vicarious, you shrink from the task; yet, for you to prove them vicarious, is so very material to your argument that unless that point can be proved the whole of your reasoning throughout this letter is perfectly nugatory. The point you have undertaken to prove is the vicarious nature of the death of Christ; the mode in which you have attempted to prove it is, by showing the resemblance between his death and the Jewish sacrifices: it follows that nothing less than the whole of your proof depends on what you say is

* P. 69.

not material to your argument! On the less definite language which you have adopted, in the latter part of the above passage, permit me to remark, as the Jewish sacrifices were appointed and commanded by Jehovah, the people of Israel could not expect to receive his mercy, and enjoy his favor, but as they drew nigh to him in the way he had appointed, and were obedient to his commands. If they rejected the provision he had made for them to come before him, with penitent hearts, to take refuge in his mercy; and turned aside from his ways, instead of renewing the expression of their subjection and obedience to him; they could not at that time receive pardon. For them to bring the sacrifices required was a part of their obedience under the law. The law was adapted to them as sinners. With his sacrifice in his hand, the Jew was to come before God, to express his gratitude, to show his subjection, and supplicate the divine mercy. Under this view I admit that sacrifices, *when required,* were the condition of pardon, something without which the offender could not be acquited. Yet, after all, it is evident, that pardon was sometimes dispensed in cases for which no sacrifice was provided. This appears from the case of David, quoted above.

It That pardon was granted under the law, as you contend, 'on a consideration perfectly distinct from mere mercy or moral character,' is what I cannot admit. God, under the law, proclaimed himself merciful and gracious, and his symbolical throne was the mercy-seat; not a vindictive being, enthroned

on a seat of wrath, never dispensing pardon, but on some consideration perfectly distinct from his mercy; not an arbitrary being, who, if he did but receive the consideration, would forgive the offender, without regarding whether he was penitent or impenitent. The Jewish sacrifices stood in close connexion with the mercy of God; and his accepting them, at the hands of the people, was intended to assure them of his mercy and favor. They were not a price paid to God for his mercy; but a mean by which the people were to draw nigh to receive it freely. Sacrifices were not a substitute for moral purity, but intended to promote it. Without penitence for sin, and moral rectitude, the Jewish sacrifices were vain and useless; yea, an abomination to the LORD. (Isa. 1 chap.) There was no virtue in the sacrifices, abstractedly considered; they were only outward means; divine mercy did every thing for the sinner; and moral purity was the end to be pursued in all the outward means.

If it be granted 'That the death of Christ has the *same* relation to the pardon of the sinner, under the christian dispensation, as the sacrifices of the Jews had to forgiveness under their dispensation,' this will have nothing at all to do with the notion of vicarious sacrifice and satisfaction for sin. The covenant which God made with Israel, which comprehended all the displays of his mercy to them, was confirmed to them by the blood of their sacrifices; the blessed gospel, which contains the highest displays of divine mercy to a guilty world, was confirmed by the

death of Christ. Their sacrifices exhibited the mercy of God; the death of Jesus affords the clearest perception of the divine love and mercy to mankind. the former were intended to reconcile and bring the people near to God; Christ, by his death, hath broken down the middle wall of separation between Jews and Gentiles; brought the latter, who were far off, nigh, and reconciled them to God. The Jewish sacrifices, connected as they were with the whole of that dispensation, were intended to make the Israelites a holy people; the death of Christ, connected as it is with the whole gospel, is intended to *purify our consciences from dead works, to serve the living God.* Thus what the former were to the Jews, the latter is to the Gentiles.

I remain yours, &c.

LETTER X.

SIR,

YOU have taken great pains to prove that the sacrifice of Christ is not figurative; but you ought to have explained what is meant by its being figurative: for your opponents believe, as firmly as you do, that Christ actually laid down his life, that he really sacrificed himself, in obedience to the will of God, for the good of mankind, in order to the removal of sin. But that he was a sacrifice in your sense of the term is denied. Whenever you speak of sacrifices, you seem to have in view a consideration supposed to be given to God as an equivalent for his mercy to mankind. If you mean that a sacrifice cannot be real, unless it be such a consideration, I hesitate not to say, that the scriptures know of nothing of the kind; and that such a notion is inconsistent with salvation by grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. It now remains for us to enquire whether the writers of the New Testament have not, in some instances, applied jewish terms, in a figurative sense, to the death of Christ.

When Christ is called *the Lamb of God*, and *the Lamb slain*, the language is evidently figurative. When he is called *our passover sacrificed for us*, the phraseology is taken from the Old Testament, and applied figuratively to Christ; literally it could not

be applied to him; for the blood of the passover was to be sprinkled on the door-posts of every house, its flesh was to be eaten, and what remained till the morning was to be burned with fire; these things never took place respecting Christ. We are told that he was *made a curse*, because he died the death of a malefactor, and was treated as an accursed person; but he was never cursed of God; for he always did those things which pleased him, was ever his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased; he has ever been a blessing, not a curse, to mankind; hence his being made a curse cannot be understood in the most strict sense. Whatever was literally accursed under the law was regarded as unclean, and was improper to sacrifice to God. Now, as Christ is said to have been made a curse, and also to give himself an offering and a sacrifice to God, it is impossible that the expressions should all be understood literally. It is evident he was not a literal sacrifice according to the forms of the Jewish law; for the altar, the fire, the ceremonial, used on such occasions, were all wanting; not to say that the law admitted not of a literal human sacrifice: hence it appears, that Jewish forms of expression are applied to the death of Christ in a figurative sense. The admission that, when he is called a sacrifice, the term sacrifice is used figuratively, by no means implies a denial that he really sacrificed himself; for it is still maintained, that he sacrificed his ease, his reputation, and his life for our benefit; that, in bringing the grace and salvation of God to us he sacrificed himself. We give as full

credit to the reality of every thing Christ has done as our opponents; but we cannot admit that the Jewish sacrificial terms, when applied to him, are to be taken in a rigid literal sense; because it would involve manifest contradictions: and in this we differ from them, we cannot admit that he did any thing to appease an angry God, to make him 'well-willing', towards us, nor that what he did was an *equivalent*, or *consideration*, given to God for his favor to mankind. Thus, Sir, having, as I conceive, set aside your premises, I shall go over the arguments you build upon them in a more cursory manner.

In reply to your first argument* I have only to remark, that, till you have proved that the jewish sacrifices were vicarious, it stands for nothing; and that we not only assert the death of Jesus to be 'a confirmation of the doctrine he taught, and an example of patient suffering,' but the highest commendation of the love of God to sinners, and that, in dying, he had a view to the salvation of the world.

To your second argument† also this may be a sufficient reply: only I would add, that the Apostles often used words figuratively without giving particular notice of it, the thing being of itself sufficiently evident; of this I have given several instances above; and you will admit that when Paul speaks of offering himself a sacrifice, and when he exhorts christians to present their body a sacrifice to God, the language is figurative: yet he has given us no notice of that being the case.

* P. 63. † P. 64.

your third argument* it is only necessary for
reply, that the passages you have quoted con-
not the most distant hint of either the jewish sa-
es, or that of Christ, being vicarious. The de-
of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews
to be to show, that whatever benefits the Jews
ed through the medium of their sacrifices,
er benefits come to us through the death of
, by the gospel.

ur fourth argument† takes for granted that the
h Priests offered vicarious sacrifices; but of
ou have given no proof; consequently your
usion, that Christ offered such a sacrifice, is
nded.

e passages quoted in your fifth argument‡ say
ng of the death of Christ being the *considera-*
which God received for the pardon of sin,
gh this is what you brought them to prove.
gh the language of scripture does not prove
you contend for, I can tell you 'what words
l be sufficient to do so;' if you could find in
criptures such words as writers on your side of
uestion have constantly used, this would do it.
you have proved that the jewish sacrifices were
ious, your arguments must stand for nothing.
ver real the sacrifice of Christ, its vicarious na-
is not to be inferred from its reality. The vica-
nature of the death of Christ is what you

* P. 66. † P. 68. ‡ P. 70.

throughout attempt to prove, not indeed in a plain and open manner, but under the pretence of proving that he made a real sacrifice: as if a sacrifice could not be real without being vicarious.

It is easy to show that your sixth argument* contains no proof, that Christ by sacrificing himself made satisfaction for sins. 'That the sacrifice of Jesus was of more value than that of the jewish priests,' is readily granted; for the life of the Messiah must be of more value than the life of a bullock or a sheep, and he sacrificed his life for our benefit; but you have not proved that either were vicarious; hence however much alike they may be proved in nature aud object this merely is nothing to your purpose. Equally inapposite is your reasoning on the superiority of the priesthood of Christ above the jewish priesthood; for this superiority is fully admitted on our side; but it by no means follows that either priesthood was instituted to appease the wrath of God, or to purchase blessings of the Father of mercies. The passage you have quoted (Heb. ix. 13, 14.) in support of your hypothesis, contains not a word of the wrath of God being appeased, of the aspect of his justice being changed, or of an equivalent being given to him for his favor to sinners, by the death of his Son; all it expresses is, that sacrifices were intended to produce a moral effect in the creature. Does not this prove that you widely differ, in your views of sacrifices, from the writer of

* P. 71.

the Epistle to the Hebrews? 'That the sacrifices of the Jews were intended to make atonement, (i. e. to bring the people nigh to God) and to purify from sin,' is granted: it is also granted that Christ sacrificed his life to bring mankind nigh to God, and to produce moral purity on a far more extensive scale.

You found your seventh argument* on Heb. x. 26; *If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.* As Christ by sacrificing himself gave the fullest confirmation to the truth, and the clearest manifestation of the love of God to sinners, those who believe the gospel will ever think of the sacrifice he made of his life, as an event of great importance; but those who despise the gospel will see nothing in it, more than in the death of any other man, that should lead them to faith in God, to hope in his mercy, to conform themselves to his will, and to wait for immortality. Those who sin wilfully, by renouncing the faith and hope of the gospel, can turn to no other medium in which the mercy and love of God are so displayed as to inspire them with the hope of a future life of happiness: consequently nothing can remain to them, when they look forward to a future state, but a fearful apprehension of the judgment of God, &c. nor can such persons find any sacrifice to offer, by which they may hope to escape the wrath to come. More than this cannot be collected from the above passage: and what has

* P. 73.

this to do with Christ's dying in the place and stead of sinners? Indeed if he bore the fiery indignation due to them, it is difficult to conceive how, consistently with strict justice, any fiery indignation should remain to be suffered by them. The whole of your argument on the above passage is totally irrelavent, and could not be supposed to have any thing to do with the doctrine you contend for, but from the knowledge that you always associate the notion of substitution with the word sacrifice.

In your eighth and last argument,* you take for granted that the despising of Moses' law consisted in a contempt of Jewish sacrifices, which you also take for granted were vicarious; hence you infer that Christ made a true, meaning a vicarious, sacrifice; because those who have trodden underfoot the Son of God, &c. are threatened with a much heavier punishment than those who despised the law of Moses. This is the substance of your argument, and it is mere inference built upon supposition. You have taken for granted the very thing in question, so far as relates to the legal sacrifices. It is admitted, that if a Jew treated with contempt the sacrifices appointed under the law he in that instance despised the law; yet you cannot be ignorant that the Jews were frequently charged with a contempt of the law, and punished for it, when they offered a profusion of sacrifices; they were told that *obedience is better than sacrifice*, and God declared that he would

not reprove them for their sacrifices, or their burnt offerings, to have been continually before him. Psalm l. 8. So he who treats the death of Christ with contempt, despises the gospel, and a most awful punishment awaits him. But what authority have you, Sir, to charge this crime upon those who treat the death of Christ with respect, and who assert that he sacrificed his life to save mankind? Is it not possible for your christian brethren to differ from *you* in their views of the death of Christ, while they firmly believe that he died for us, without exposing themselves to the foul charge of treading underfoot the Son of God, and of supposing his death to be of no more use than that of any other man? Instead of affecting to lament over those who differ from you, and saying *alas! for them*, would it not be more to the purpose to bring forward some plain express declaration of scripture, in which it is plainly asserted that Christ died in the place and stead of sinners? This no doubt you would have done had you known where to find such a passage. We will attend to evidence, but your either condemning of, or mourning over us, will not alter our views of truth. Do you not think, Sir, that among those who have maintained that Christ became a vicarious sacrifice, there have been many who have trodden underfoot the Son of God. You cannot be ignorant that the notion for which you contend has been maintained for several ages in the church of Rome, by the bulk of nominal christians, and by many who have shewn themselves practical Atheists. Yes, Sir, the disciples of

reputed Orthodoxy have been very numerous. Have none of these trodden underfoot the Son of God, by despising his authority, treated the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing, by their abuse of it to unholy purposes, and done despite to the spirit of grace, by their unchristian spirit and conduct?

If Christ fulfilled the law, and suffered all its penalties in the place and stead of sinners, will you have the goodness to show how it comes to pass, that a much heavier penalty awaits the transgressor since, than before Christ bore the penalty in his stead.

To what you say* concerning praying in the name of Christ, I reply, if he bought and paid for every thing we receive of God, it is difficult to say what need there can be for prayer; it would, in that case, seem more proper to ask for pardon as a thing we had a right to claim; for if justice received an adequate consideration for it, at the hands of our substitue, it cannot be justly withholden from us. Having examined your proof 'from the nature of the Jewish sacrifices and priesthood;' it only remains for me to consider your last Letter.

I remain yours, &c.

* P. 77.

LETTER XI.

SIR,

IN your last letter you attempt to maintain
: notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sin, on
: ground of *the nature and fitness of things;* of
ırse the subject is now brought to the test of reason.
When you declare* that it is ' a disquisition,
ich is by no means interesting to common christi-
, or at all *essential* to the main doctrine,' whether
: sacrifice of Christ ' is to be considered as an ex-
, and, in all respects, an equivalent *satisfaction*
sin,' you give up the ground on which the doc-
ıe of satisfaction has been usually defended. That
: law could make no abatement, that all the de-
nds of justice must be fully satisfied, that the
ole of the penalty incurred by sin must be exact-
before sinners could be saved consistently with
tice, is the ground on which *that* doctrine has
n supported: According to which representa-
n, the death of Christ must be 'an exact, and, in
respects, equivalent *satisfaction* for sin;' but this
ı deny to be essential to the main doctrine for
ich you contend: Yet, if all this be not essen-
to it, sinners may be saved, without the full pe-
ty incurred by sin being exacted; without that

* P. 78.

full satisfaction being made to divine justice for the sins of men, by the Savior, for which so many good men have contended. Here, Sir, if you do not differ from yourself in other parts of your letters, (which, probably, the reader will think is the case) you certainly differ from the most celebrated writers on your side; for they have thought *that* essential which you think non-essential and uninteresting to common christians. If you give up the notion, that the sacrifice of Christ 'is to be considered as an exact, and, in all respects, equivalent *satisfaction* for sin,' do you not give up the very ground on which you stand as an advocate for reputed Orthodoxy? According to your views of the death of Christ, it must either be a full payment of the demands of justice, or a composition accepted by justice in lieu of full payment. The latter is what the above passage seems to express. But if justice can accept of what may be compared to a composition accepted by a creditor on behalf of an insolvent debtor, there is some abatement of its demands, part of the debt is forgiven without payment, part of the penalty due to sin removed from the sinner without its being inflicted on another in his stead. If this can be done without injury to justice, why might not the whole be freely forgiven, in the same way, without injury to justice? To me, what you have admitted, as above, seems fatal to the whole of your subsequent reasoning; which proceeds on the supposition that the penalty of sin cannot be remitted, without great public injury, 'that the *goodness*, as well as the *justice* of God, for-

bids his remitting the penalty annexed to a breach of any of his laws.'* If this be true of the whole penalty it must be so of every part of it, and it must be interesting to common christians, and *essential* to the main doctrine you contend for, to prove that the sacrifice of Christ 'is to be considered as an exact, and, in all respects, an equivalent *satisfaction* for sin;' but you have declared the contrary. You contend for a commuted penalty; but to admit this would be, according to the grounds of reasoning you adopt, for justice to stoop to a compromise fatal to the divine authority, and the general good of the universe.

You inform us that what you mean to prove is, '*That the consistency of that character* (the character of God) *is involved in the executing the penalty annexed to the transgression of his laws; and that there is no absurdity or inconsistency in supposing that that penalty was executed in the death of our Lord Jesus Christ.*'† How then do you maintain the consistency of that character when you describe the whole business as a sort of compromise, and represent that it was a commuted penalty that was executed on Christ? What insuperable difficulties attend your system! I agree with you that we ought not to ground our arguments, respecting the conduct of God, upon *á priori* reasoning. By *á priori* reasoning, I mean that which is adopted respecting the divine nature and government, independently of what is manifested

* P. 94. † P. 80.

and revealed; not that which is founded upon the known character and perfections of the Deity, as manifested by his visible works, and plainly revealed in the scriptures; though this, in one sense, may be called *á priori*, as it relates to his conduct in future.

In bringing the point at issue between us to the bar of reason, to show the consistency of a vicarious sacrifice with *the nature and fitness of things*, it was reasonable to expect you would attempt to show that it agrees with what God hath manifested of himself in his visible works: that the phenomena of nature teach us that the creator and governor of the universe is a vindictive being, who exerciseth no mercy towards his offending creatures, until his wrath is appeased by the blood of an innocent victim: that he cannot spare the guilty, unless the innocent first expire in agonies under his hand: that he does not bestow blessings on sinners without receiving an equivalent or consideration for them: that the eternal principles of justice, as discoverable by reason, show it to be perfectly equitable to impute guilt to and punish the innocent, in the place and stead of the guilty: that to secure the honor of a law, and make its authority regarded, to promote the ends of strict justice, and preserve peace and good order in society, it is most agreeable to *the nature and fitness of things*, to punish the innocent, and let the guilty go free. It is necessary for you to make these things appear; if you would maintain your cause at the bar of reason. But this, Sir, you have not even attempted.

You have preferred 'reasoning from human governments to the divine;'* declaring, that you consider the government of God, '*in its grand outlines*, as analogous to those of men.' And how have you made out the analogy? Why, truly, 'God speaks of himself as a *sovereign*, a *judge*, and a *lawgiver*. He has given *laws*, and enforced them by *sanctions*. He has erected a *tribunal*, and appointed *a day of judgment*, in which he will treat every man according to his works.' And you infer, that 'all these expressions necessarily point out a resemblance in *the grand distinctive features* between the divine and human governments.' Thus you conclude, that the government of God must resemble human governments, merely because the same terms, in a few instances, are applied to both. The absurdity of this conclusion is manifest. Even *you* would not admit it, if an attempt were made, in the same way, to prove the analogy between one human government and another. In *Turkey*, there is a *sovereign*, there are *laws*, *tribunals*, *&c.* as well as in *Great Britain*. But you would feel indignant to hear it asserted, that the government of *Great Britain* is analogous, *in its grand outlines*, to that of *Turkey*, that a few terms being applied in common to both, necessarily point out a resemblance between them in their *grand distinctive features*: you would justly deem the person who asserted this, guilty of a libel on our free constitution. If you were to hear a man reasoning from

* P. 80, 81.

the conduct of *Nero* to that of the *sovereign* of this realm, and from the court of inquisition to the courts of judicature in this country, would you not cry out against the absurdity and injustice of his conduct? Yet, surely, there would be more propriety in talking of an analogy between the best and worst governments on earth than in supposing the divine government 'analogous to those of men.' All human governments are imperfect; but the government of God is founded in infinite perfection. How can we reason from finite, imperfect creatures, to the absolute infinite, all-perfect God? or from their conduct to his? He hath said, *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways.* If you decline reasoning from the known character and perfections of God to the nature of his conduct, you do not decline reasoning from the institutions and conduct of frail sinful mortals to the government and conduct of that being who is infinitely wise and benevolent. A mode of reasoning this of the most fallacious nature: it is altogether deciding on the ground of inferences arising from false principles: as much as to say, *we know what human governments are, we know how earthly governors act; therefore we understand the divine government, we know how God will act; for his government is like theirs.* Surely it would be much wiser to say, *we know that God is infinitely merciful and kind:* therefore all his conduct will be merciful and kind. Though you 'mention our notions of a perfect human government,' you do

ıot say what that would be; but generally reason rom what already exists.

The false grounds of analogy which you adopted ed you, I conceive, into a mistake respecting the *istributive* justice of God;* as if his distributive and ublic justice did not proceed on precisely the same rinciples: hence your strange assertion, '*Distributive* justice can in no instance admit of grace, which the treating of a person more favorably than he eserves.' Surely, Sir; you must have mistaken the ature of the distributive justice of God; for where the man whom God treats, in any instance, merely ccording to his deserts? The Psalmist certainly iffered from you, when he said, *To thee also belongh mercy for thou renderest to every man according to s works.* (Psalm lxii. 12.) Your reasoning is unded, in this instance, upon mere abstract noons of justice, utterly inapplicable to the Deity. ow harsh it sounds to talk of the surrender of one vine attribute to another! or of the surrender of vine justice in any sense! yet you talk of the *surnder* of his *distributive* to his *public* justice! Such e the absurdities in which your hypothesis inlves you.

It is fully granted, that the laws of God were not ended for the good of the individual, in opposin to the general interest of the universe; but you m to suppose,† that, because human governments laws cannot combine the good of the individual,

* P. 82. † P. 83.

in every instance, with the general good of society, God, under his government, and by the operation of his laws, cannot do it. That the former cannot do it is owing to the imperfection which attaches to all human institutions; but, surely, no imperfection attaches to the latter. It is well known, that, in the prisons in *Philadelphia*, the good of criminals has been combined with the interests of society; and I pretend not to say, whether, in a more improved state of human society and laws, the good of the individual will not, in most, if not all cases, be combined with the general good, so that punishments will be inflicted with a view to the good of the punished, as well as to secure the welfare of society: and, in that case *public* and *distributive* justice will become identical. You must admit, that, could such a system be adopted, and rendered generally practicable, it would add much to the perfection of human institutions; and what but the imperfection of human wisdom and ability prevents its practicability? But God can neither want wisdom nor ability to give the highest perfection to his government and laws.

Granting what you contend for,* 'That every transgression is a public injury,' it remains for you to prove that the sufferings of an innocent person repair that injury. Suppose a man is found murdered; a hue and cry is raised; the murderer is seized; but an innocent man offers to take his place, and suffer in his stead: this offer is complied with, and the

P. 84.

guilty person is suffered to go free. Would the execution of the innocent person repair the injury done to the public by the murder, or tend to prevent its repetition? You grant that as 'Sin is a public evil, penalties are intended to repair that evil;' but you will find it difficult to prove, that vindictive punishments, in any case, repair the injury done by crimes. The blood of the murderer does not restore the murdered to life; the injury remains the same though the criminal justly suffers. Judgment, mingled with mercy, might have a salutary effect, and make the injurious person of some use to society; but how the cutting off a useful member of the community, who had done no injury to any one, that the real criminal might go unpunished, could benefit the community, is what you will not be able to show, on the ground of *the nature and fitness of things.* I admit, that a *just* penalty restores the tone of authority; but for a penalty to be *just*, it must be inflicted on the real offender, not on one who has never offended. You should have shown how the relaxed tone of authority would be restored by punishing an obedient child, or faithful servant, in the place and stead of a rebellious subject; but you have declined telling us how such a conduct would agree with *the fitness of things.*

I remain yours, &c.

LETTER XII.

SIR,

BY this time, I hope I have refuted the premises you adopt in your last letter. Inferences must stand or fall with the premises from which they arise. Those which are derived from *false premises* are set aside by the refutation of the premises. An exposure of the fallacy of the premises invalidates every inference derived from them. These maxims I expect you will not controvert. If I have succeeded in my attempt to show the fallacy of the premises you have adopted, of which the reader will judge, I might with propriety omit noticing your inferences; for they stand for nothing unless the premises be just. But, seeing the premises may be just, and at the same time the inferences unjust, because not fairly arising from the premises, I proceed to examine your inferences distinctly; and I trust that I shall be able to show that, whether I have succeeded or failed in refuting the premises, the inferences you make from them are unfounded.

1. You infer,* *That punishment is not intended for the good of the individual, but for that of the general community.* But, Sir, is it reasonable to suppose that the good of the individual, and that of the general

* P. 86.

community, must be for ever separated, and eternally clash with each other, under the infinitely wise and benevolent government of God? You acknowledge* that 'all good laws do, as far as possible, *combine* public and private happiness.' And dare you presume to say where this possibility ends under the government of that God with whom all things are possible. Yes, you have presumed to limit the Holy One of Israel in this particular, you have represented that this possibility ends where punishment begins. Your inference does not hold universally, even in reference to human governments; there are many instances among men in which punishment is inflicted with a view to the reformation, consequently the good, of the individual, as well as the good of the public. You seem to think the divine government more sanguinary than most human governments. It might be supposed you had *Draco* in your view (who is said to have written his laws in blood, because he made death the punishment of every crime, even the slightest offence) when making the comparison between human governments and that of God; but, to the honor of human nature be it spoken, the generality of earthly governors are not *Dracos:* much less can the government of the Father of mercies be supposed to resemble that of so bloody a man. If the government of God must be compared with that of men, it surely ought to be with the most mild, equi-

* P. 84.

table, and benevolent part of human administrations; not with those systems which punish but to destroy. Granting that 'the grand design in every punishment is to maintain the unimpaired authority of the laws, and the collective good of the system;' it remains for you to prove that it is more agreeable to *the fitness of things* to suppose this design will be better effected by punishing the innocent, than by so punishing the guilty as to bring them into entire submission and willing obedience to the laws, and make them useful in the general system. You seem to think all the punishments inflicted by God must necessarily be vindictive; but, whatever you may think, it is certain he has often inflicted punishment with a view to the good of the punished. What think you of the punishments inflicted on his people Israel? It is declared that *he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men:* (Lam. iii. 33.) and that the design of the punishment of Jacob was to purge his iniquity, and take away his sin. (Isa. xxviii. 9.) It remains for you to show how the asserting that divine punishments are corrective, and that God combines the good of the individual with that of the general community, 'destroys the sanctions of law and justice;' which you have insinuated to be the case.

2. *You infer* that a just penalty cannot be remitted by a just and good governor.* Have you considered, Sir, where this maxim will carry you? You will ad-

* P. 87.

mit that the penalty due to sinners is just; but is not this penalty remitted when the sinner is pardoned? If a just penalty cannot be remitted how can any sinner be saved? What becomes of the mercy of God? And how can there be any such thing as forgiveness of sins? Perhaps you will say, *the penalty is not remitted, for it was inflicted on the substitute;* but, then, as you have brought the cause to the bar of reason, you ought to prove that the punishing of the innocent in the place and stead of the guilty is what reason can discover to be just. Could you even prove *that*, you would set aside the forgiveness of sins; for where no penalty is remitted nothing is forgiven. You think the exercise of mercy in the remission of penalties a proof of imperfection in human governments. Do you also think that the exercise of mercy in the remitting of penalties would be an imperfection in the divine government? I am at a loss to tell what your reasoning goes to prove unless it be this; but, if so, why not speak out? Why not avow the design of divesting God of his darling attribute *mercy*, so far, at least, as relates to the remission of punishment, and of denying his prerogative to forgive sins freely? After all, it is evident from the scriptures that God does remit just penalties. Had not *David* incurred the penalty of death, in the affair of *Uriah*, when *Nathan* was sent to him? Yet *Nathan* said the LORD had put away his sin, that he should not die; nor did the Prophet make any mention of the penalty being borne by another in his place and stead. Would not the destruction of *Ni-*

nevah have been a just penalty, when *Jonah* was sent to proclaim it among the people of that city? Yet, upon their repentance this just penalty was remitted. And God hath said, that, when he threatens to inflict penalties, (no doubt just ones) if those he threatens repent, he will remit the penalties. (Jer. xviii. 7, 8.) Thus, Sir, it appears that your doctrine is in direct opposition to scripture.

3. The foregoing remarks may also serve to show the futility of your third inference;* '*That if repentance be sufficient for the pardon of sin, or what is the same thing, if God can consistently pardon sin in consideration of the penitence of the sinner, then repentance is equivalent to the penalty annexed to a breach of the divine law.*' Here, Sir, you have carefully omitted the divine mercy; as if we supposed the penitence of the sinner was sufficient for his pardon, without taking the mercy of God into the consideration! than which nothing can be more untrue. We should rather say that the mercy of God is sufficient for the pardon of all who are penitent: this is what we affirm. You have dared to assert that it cannot 'be consistently maintained that sin can be pardoned in consideration of repentance.' This, your bold assertion, is in flat contradiction to the plain declarations of scripture. *He who confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall find mercy.* Prov. xxviii. 13.) *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mer-*

ry upon him; to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. (Isa. lv. 7.) *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.* (Ezek. xviii. 27.) In these passages no consideration is mentioned but the repentance of the sinner, and his forgiveness is represented as flowing from the divine mercy to him as penitent. If, however, you will still contend that *this* is making repentance equivalent to the penalty of sin, you must contend with the sacred writers who have stated the subject in this light. It appears perfectly consistent with *the nature and fitness of things*, that the penitent sinner should be pardoned, and the impenitent punished; in both cases, the authority of the laws, and the good of the universe, are secured; while each individual receives that which is most fit and proper for him. Reason must dictate that the repentance of the sinner does more towards removing the evil produced by transgression, and repairing the breach made by sin, than the punishment of an innocent person: consequently, if the object of justice be the removal of the evil and the repairing of the breach, the former must be more satisfactory to justice than the latter. The mere death of an innocent person leaves the evil remaining, and the breach open; but, so far as a man departs from sin, evil ceases; so far as he returns to the paths of righteousness, and does that which is right, the breach is made up. It is granted, that Christ is the remover of evil, and the healer of the breach; but he removes evil by actually free-

ing the creature from it, by the influence of the gospel; and he heals the breach by restoring men to the paths of virtue.

4. You infer,* *That as it is the office of public justice, to maintain the laws in their vigor, and to guard the general interests from injury, whatever secures these objects, answers all the indispensable claims of justice.* I agree with you in this proposition; but contend that, so far from strengthening your hypothesis, it is fatal to it; for how can giving an impunity to criminals, by inflicting the punishment due to them on an innocent person, maintain the vigor of the laws? How can the infliction of punishment on the innocent guard the general interests from injury? You, Sir, must have strange conceptions of *the nature and fitness of things*, to suppose these objects are secured, and *all the indispensable claims of justice answered*, by an innocent person being put to an infamous and excruciating death, by the hands of wicked men. On our side it is contended, that the above objects are secured by the offender's being brought to repentance, submission, and obedience to the laws; by whatever means this change is effected in him, whether by punishment or otherwise. You must allow that when the offender is brought to submission and obedience to the laws, so far as relates to him, their vigor will be maintained, and, so far from the general interests being injured, they will be promoted by him: consequently, according

* P. 89.

according to your own statement of the subject, repentance, submission, and obedience must *answer all the indispensable claims of justice;* and your notion of atonement is superseded. If, under any human government, it was attempted to maintain the laws in their vigor, and guard the general interests from injury, by punishing the innocent in the place of the guilty, would not universal outrage and contempt of the laws be the consequence? Yet you consider human governments as models of the divine government, in its *grand outlines!* For rebels to repent and return to their allegiance answers every indispensable claim of justice, as you have stated those claims; but notwithstanding the sufferings and death of an innocent person, rebels may continue in rebellion, and the general good be greatly interrupted: consequently, on your own ground, the death of the innocent person does not answer the indispensable claims of justice: and *you* will admit, that the vigor of the laws is not so maintained by the death of Christ as to keep men from sinning, nor the general interests so guarded but that daily injuries take place. Excuse me then if I say you stand refuted on your own ground.

After contending that 'the divine government, *in its grand outlines,* is analogous to those of men,' and that there is 'a resemblance in *the grand distinctive features,* between the divine and human governments,' even after taking this supposed analogy as the ground of your reasoning and arguments, you are constrained to acknowledge, that 'no man has a

right to offer himself, where life has been forfeited, to suffer in the place of another; nor has any man a right to accept of the voluntary surrender of such a life: for though justice might be satisfied, in so doing, in any given case, yet it would be injured in another, and thereby the public welfare would ultimately suffer by such a substitution.'* This, Sir, is a mortal blow, given by yourself, to your favorite notion of substitution: you acknowledge that it would be unjust and injurious under human governments, and you acknowledge that the government of God resembles them, in its *grand distinctive features:* how then can you any longer contend that the plan of substitution is a grand distinctive feature under the divine government? What becomes of the analogy which you stated to be the ground of your reasoning? You acknowledge it does not exist in the instance in which you most of all need it: you cannot find it to have any being in the only case which could validate your arguments, even on your own premises: yea more, by pursuing that analogy the whole of your hypothesis is destroyed.

It is to no purpose you argue that 'in some cases of a *criminal* nature, even in *human* governments, justice seems to have been satisfied without exacting the full penalty on the offender;' for you have fully admitted that this ought not to be the case, on the ground of substitution, where life is forfeited; and you consider sin against God as a capital crime

* P. 91.

whereby life is forfeited. You seem to feel your arguments turning against your own system and labor hard to extricate yourself from the dilemma in which your own reasoning involves you.

The point you have undertaken to prove is, that a vicarious sacrifice is not inconsistent with *the nature and fitness of things*: the ground of reasoning which you assume to prove this point is, that the government of God, in its *grand outlines*, resembles that of men: according to which you should have shown that the putting one man to death in the place and stead of another is fit and proper in human governments, in order to proving it fit and proper under the divine administration. In going on, however, you find it would be unfit and injurious among men, and it follows, on your premises, that it would be unfit and injurious under the government of God. If this be not the natural result of your ground of reasoning, where is the *analogy* you contend for? and what is the use of bringing it forward on the present occasion? How can you contend against that *analogy* without renouncing the basis of your inferences? Yet, you are compelled to renounce it, so far as the notion of substitution is concerned, to avoid overturning what you mean to defend.

Truly, Sir, you have given a specimen of what a dangerous weapon reason is, when used in defence of reputed Orthodoxy; it is apt to wound what it is retained to guard. I do not question the right of God to do whatever he pleaseth; but that he will do what,

you acknowledge, would be contrary to right, and injurious to society, if done by earthly governors, that he will act in opposition to the best notions he hath given us of justice and the fitness of things, requires substantial proof before it receives credit. Such proof you have not attempted, though you have taken for granted that he does what would be wrong for men to do.

5. You infer, *That there is no absurdity or inconsistency, in supposing that Jesus Christ has paid the full or equivalent penalty of sin.** Yes, Sir, there is manifest absurdity in such a supposition; for you have acknowledged that 'No man has a right to offer himself, where life has been forfeited, to suffer in the place of another; nor has any man a right to accept of the voluntary surrender of such a life,' and it would be absurd to suppose God to do what he would condemn as wrong in his creatures.

Your fifth inference being built upon reasonings to which I have already replied, and being supported by no new arguments from the fitness of things, requires but little animadversion; for, if I have proved, that the substitution of another in the place of the offender is contrary to our natural ideas of justice, inconsistent with what the nature of things suggests to be most fit and proper, and not calculated to prevent the public good from being impaired, it will follow, that the notion of such substitution is absurd and inconsistent with the fitness of things. These

* P. 92.

things I have attempted to prove on your own premises. Your inference derives as little support from the passages of scripture you have quoted* as it does from reason; and your barely quoting them, with the positive assertions and conclusions you connect with them, will not be admitted as proof.

Lastly, you infer,† *That to expect happiness in any other way than by the atonement of Jesus Christ, implies an expectation, either that the established order and nature of things may be changed, or that the penalty may be fully paid by the offender, and he survive that payment.* I reply, 1. That this inference being built upon those which precede it, and forming the last link of a chain already broken in every part, it has nothing to support it, but must share the fate of its companions. 2. That until you can prove, that it is contrary to the established order and nature of things for God to be merciful, for him to forgive sins freely, to exempt the penitent from punishment on the ground of his free favor, to receive him as Christ speaks of the Father's receiving the returning prodigal, and to bestow blessings without receiving an equivalent for them—until you can prove all this, to expect happiness on a ground different to that you contend for, ought not to be thought to imply that the established order and nature of things may be changed. It is contended by us, that it is according to the order which God hath established, both in nature and scripture, for him to pardon penitent sin-

* P. 93. † P. 94.

ners freely, to punish the impenitent, and to bestow blessings upon his creatures without receiving any equivalent. 3. You must either say, that there is no such thing as the free forgiveness of sins, or be inconsistent with yourself, while contending that the penalty of sin must be fully paid, before the offender can be set at liberty; for, if the penalty be fully paid, there can be nothing to forgive. To be consistent, you must either renounce the doctrine of mercy, forgiveness of sins, and free salvation, or give up the inference I am examining.

Your remarks under the foregoing inference, contain nothing but what I consider to be sufficiently answered already. Something more than reasoning founded on false principles, declamation, and solemn expostulation, is necessary to convince us that we 'trample underfoot the Son of God, and account his blood common,' merely because we dare to judge for ourselves, and reject what we think erroneous in the sentiments of reputed orthodox men. Yes, Sir, we deny, and even smile at the charge. We think you ought to give some proof of your infallibility before you assume so high a tone. We regard such declamation, uttered with a solemn air, as one of the little artifices of reputed orthodox men, to deter others from free enquiry.

After all the displeasure you manifested at being called a *satisfactionist*, and after changing the terms by which the doctrine you maintain is commonly expressed, you at length speak out plainly, and tell us, that you 'hesitate not to call the death of Christ a

full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.'* Had you been thus explicit in the outset it might have saved some circumlocution. This indeed is what I have understood you to have in view throughout; but you have discovered a fearfulness of expressing yourself in the most direct and unequivocal terms, as if sensible of the embarrassment which attends your hypothesis. Now you avow that it is 'a full, perfect and sufficient— — — —satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world,' you contend for, you ought to obviate the difficulties and contradictions which such a notion involves, and which you have hitherto endeavored to shun by using terms less direct.

I have now finished my reply to your letters in defence of the popular notion of atonement. I am not conscious that I have, in any instance, omitted fairly meeting 'the face of your arguments,' or passed unnoticed any thing material in your letters. Some passages which you have omitted in the present copy, which they contained when inserted in the U. T. M. and also the Notes appended to them, I propose examining in the appendix to this volume. Throughout, my object has been to vindicate the divine character from that foul stain which the notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sin would fix upon it. At the same time, I have kept in view the importance of the mission and work of Christ, and endeavored to maintain the doctrine of salvation by

* P. 98.

grace, which your notion of atonement tends to subvert. I grant that it has been my aim to shake that sandy foundation, on which I fear too many are building, i. e. the notion that sinners become righteous by being wrapped up in the personal righteousness of another, in direct opposition to the words of Christ, (Matt. vii. 24.) that none but those who *do* what he hath said, build upon a good foundation; and of his beloved disciple, (1 John iii. 7.) that he who *doeth* righteousness is righteous.

I remain, Sir, with sincere good will,

Yours, &c.

R. W.

CHAPTER THIRD.

A brief view of the opinions of the writers of the Old Testament concerning the death of Christ: including remarks on the Fifty-third Chapter of Isaiah.

THE hypothesis of our opponents is, that the death of Christ was vicarious, that sinners never could, consistently with divine justice, be accepted with God, but on the ground of his having died, or engaged to die, in their place and stead, and that his death, as a vicarious sacrifice, is the only possible ground of hope. If this hypothesis be true, we may expect to find that, from the foundation of the world, by Moses and all the Prophets, the vicarious sacrifice of Christ has been pointed out, and placed before sinners as the only ground of their hope; for how otherwise could they have any hope, or enjoy acceptance with God? If, however, we find Moses and all the Prophets silent on these points, this will go far towards setting aside the notion of satisfaction for sins.

Our first enquiry is: at what period of the world was it revealed that Christ should die? for before it was made known that he should die it cannot be pretended that his death could be viewed by men as a sacrifice for sins.

Men could have no idea of Christ or his death until something was revealed on the subject, nor could their knowledge extend beyond what was revealed. The death of Christ could not be to them a ground of hope while they remained ignorant of it. His death is not mentioned, nor even hinted at, in the writings of Moses. The following are the only passages in the *Pentateuch* which make any mention of Christ, either directly or indirectly.

1. What is commonly called the first promise; Gen. iii. 15. but this, at most, can be considered as referring to Christ only in an indirect and very obscure way, and certainly could teach nothing concerning his death. If understood to refer literally to him, it could only suggest that he would sustain some slight injury, such as a bruise on the heel, something far short of the loss of his life. It is most probable that the Serpent in the Mosaic account of the fall is used as an emblem of the deceivableness of the human heart, or of man's desires by which he is led away and enticed to sin: James i. 14. and the bruising of his head may intend the victory which the descendants of *Eve*, her seed at large, shall ultimately obtain over their irregular desires, which have subjected them to suffering for a time. Viewed in this light Christ may be said to bruise the head of the Serpent for us, as by the teaching and influence of his gospel the dominion of our lusts and passions is destroyed.

2. The promise to Abraham, Gen. xxii. 18. afterwards renewed to Isaac and Jacob: However clearly

this promise might be understood, it conveyed not the least idea of the sufferings and death of Christ.

3. What Jacob mentioned, Gen. xlix. 10. concerning the coming of *Shiloh*. It is immaterial to our present enquiry whether Jacob by *Shiloh* meant Christ; for it is evident the passage contains not the most distant hint of the death of the person called *Shiloh*.

4. Balaam's prophecy, Num. xxiv. 17. which some may be disposed to refer to Christ, seems to have no such meaning, at any rate no one can pretend to find in it the least intimation of his death.

5. The prophecy of Moses, Deut. xviii. 15—19. This is the most direct and explicit notice of Christ in the Pentateuch; but this holds him forth merely as a Prophet and Teacher, without giving the slightest hint that he would suffer and die.

The foregoing being the only passages in the writings of Moses in which our opponents can pretend to find any mention of Christ, and in them no hint of his sufferings and death being found, how can they help admitting that, so far as we can discover, his death was an event concerning which nothing was revealed so early as the days of Moses? If they say his death was typified by the jewish sacrifices, this is what neither Moses nor the Prophets ever mentioned, and, consequently, the Jews could have no such idea. If it be said Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, that therefore his death must have been pointed out in all ages. To

this I answer, that, if he be called the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, it can only mean in the view and designation of God, who seeth the end from the beginning, and calleth things that are not as though they were: the expression, *from the foundation of the world*, in Rev. xiii. 8. may be connected with the writing of the names in the book of life, not with the slaying of the Lamb:* as the same thing is expressed, chap. xvii. 8.

If there could be no ground of hope for sinners, no way of acceptance with God, but the death of Christ, it must follow that Moses left the people of Israel without any knowledge of the way of acceptance, in a hopeless state: yet he said he had set life before them, and that they might obtain it by a practical regard to what God had revealed.

After the death of Moses, we read of no further revelation, or discovery, either by promise or prophecy, concerning Christ, before the times of David. Thus it appears that for, at least, half the time which has elapsed since sin entered into the world mankind, even those to whom God made himself known by immediate revelation, remained unavoidably in total ignorance that ever such an event as

* 'The last words, *from the foundation of the world*, are not to be connected with the preceding words, *the Lamb slain*, but with the more remote words, thus, *whose names are not written from the foundation of the world, in the book of life of the Lamb slain.*' CURCELLÆUS, and DU VEIL. See also DAUBUZ in loc. Not to say that καταβολης κοσμου may mean the foundation of the new world, i. e. the establishment of the gospel age or dispensation.

the death of Christ would take place. It follows that if our opponents be right all men must during that long period have remained without hope, and total strangers to the way of acceptance with God; but surely they had a ground of hope placed before them in the mercy, promises and law of God, and a way of acceptance opened to them by the institutions and precepts which were given them. If the supposed vicarious sacrifice of Christ be the only possible ground of hope to sinners, and the only way of acceptance with God, our opponents can produce no evidence to show that any sinner could find a ground of hope, or enjoy acceptance with God, during the long period of near three thousand years. Were they to follow their hypothesis to its natural consequence they must consider all the faithful who lived in those early ages as having remained without hope, and strangers to acceptance with God; but they dare not assert that *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, and many other righteous persons were not accepted with him; yet there is not the least proof that any person before *David*, received the most obscure revelation that Christ would suffer and die.

Let us next examine in what light the death of Christ is spoken of in the book of Psalms.

Psa. ii. In this Psalm the death of Christ is not mentioned. If it be supposed that his sufferings and death are implied in what is said concerning the combination of the people, and their rulers, against the LORD, and against his anointed; still this will involve no implication of his suffering from the hand

of his righteous Father, but rather tend to prove the contrary, i. e. that he was put to death in opposition to the will of God.

Psa. xvi. 10. *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine holy one to see corruption.* However strongly this passage may imply the death of the person spoken of, it says nothing respecting the cause, manner, or design of his death: and it would be contrary to the import of the Psalm at large to suppose he died under the wrath of God.

Psa. xxii. Could it be proved that this Psalm is throughout a prophecy concerning Christ, it would only follow that God left him in the hands of wicked men, and that all he suffered was inflicted by them. The passages in it which are applied to Christ, in the New Testament, militate against the notion that he died under the hand of divine justice; for they describe what was done to him by men only.

Psa. xl. 6—9. However applicable to Christ, certainly contains no intimation concerning his death. It teaches that instead of burnt-offering and sin-offering, God required obedience to his will, and shows the readiness of the person spoken of to do his will. This is utterly incompatible with the notion that nothing could be so pleasing to God as a bleeding sacrifice.

Psa. lxviii. 18. If a direct prediction concerning Christ, contains no information respecting his sufferings and death; but relates entirely to his ascension and exaltation.

Psa. lxix. Whatever in this Psalm may be thought prophetic of Christ, relates to his zeal for God, his goodness to men, their malice and cruel treatment of him, and his deep affliction produced by their conduct; not the least hint is dropped of his suffering from the avenging hand of God.

I know of no other passages in the Psalms that our opponents would think of applying to the sufferings of Christ, unless in a way of accommodation: and the above express nothing relative to his suffering from the hand of God, or in the place and stead of sinners; but, so far as they express any thing respecting his sufferings, represent them as inflicted by wicked men. Thus, until the days of Isaiah, for thirty-three centuries after sin entered into the world, it cannot be pretended that the least intimation was given that Christ should die in the place and stead of sinners; yet, during that period, we find the virtuous animated with hope, and rejoicing in the salvation of God.

We come next to the Prophets.

Isaiah is supposed by our opponents, not only to have written very explicitly concerning the death of the Messiah, but to have plainly represented his sufferings as vicarious. How far they are right in this supposition we shall now examine.

Chap. xlii. 21. *The LORD is well pleased for his rightsousness sake, he will magnify the law and make it honorable.* It has been taken for granted that this passage relates to *Jehovah's* being well pleased with the righteousness which Christ is supposed to have

wrought for sinners, by dying in their place and stead. But it may be observed, 1. That the Prophet in this place makes no mention of the sufferings of Christ. 2. That it is not of the righteousness of Christ, but of Jehovah, that he is speaking, of the pleasure which he takes in the rectitude of his own ways, and his determination to exalt his law and make it respected, notwithstanding the ignorance and folly of his professing people, the Jews. 3. That were it granted that the words express the Father's high approbation of the obedience of his Son Jesus, it would not follow that he performed that obedience in the place and stead of sinners, nor that God was well pleased with his disobedient creatures on account of the obedience of his righteous servant. LOWTH translates the passage 'Yet JEHOVAH was gracious to him, for his truth's sake: he hath exalted his own praise, and made it glorious.' This rendering agrees with the context, which treats of the ignorance and folly of Jacob, and of the continuance of the divine mercy to him, and with undeniable facts in the history of the Jewish people.

Chap. liii. Is resorted to for proof of the notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sins more than any part of the Old Testament: some particular expressions in it have often been alleged as asserting that notion unequivocally. For this reason I shall be the more particular in my remarks upon it.

After all the use made of this part of prophecy, by reputed orthodox writers, it is questioned by some whether the Prophet in writing it had any view to Christ, or delivered it as prophetic of his sufferings. The only thing in favor of the popular exposition is that some parts of it are quoted and applied to Christ in the New Testament; but even this is not a decisive proof of its being originally written as a prophecy of his sufferings. That man must have read the New Testament with but little attention, at least he cannot have carefully compared it with the Old, who has not observed that the first teachers of christianity accommodated many passages in the Jewish Prophets to the circumstances and events of their own times, which had originally no such reference. 'In some way or other the chapter may relate to the Jews, perhaps put into the mouth of the wicked amongst them, by the Prophet, and referring to the just and pious who with them had been led into captivity, (as Le Clerc seems to suppose) or it may be supposed to be spoken by some foreign people who were benefited by the sufferings of the Jews, or it may have some very different meaning, without any reference to the Messiah;' for we ought not to conclude, because we cannot fully ascertain the precise meaning of any particular prophecy, at this distance of time, that therefore it must expressly refer to some particular circumstances to which we may think it applicable, or to which it may have been accommo-

dated formerly. This method of concluding has filled the world with imaginary and contradictory expositions of sacred prophecy, led to the supposition of its double meaning, and tended to bring divine revelation into contempt. To prove that we have the true sense of any prophecy, it is incumbent on us to show that it had originally a specific reference to the thing to which we apply it; and not merely that it is capable of being accommodated to illustrate it.*

I state the above, not because I think the chapter we are about to examine, when viewed as a real prophecy of the sufferings of Christ, favorable to the popular doctrine of atonement; for I trust I shall be able to prove the contrary; but because an impartial regard to truth seems to require that so much should be stated.

First. I will attempt to prove that the chapter before us, from which the advocates for the notion of satisfaction have brought their chief Old Testa-

* I do not mean to say that the chapter in question is not a real prophecy of Christ; but that this is a point on which learned and pious men are divided in opinion, and which perhaps cannot be decided so as to leave no just ground for difference of opinion: that, consequently, it ought not to be taken as the foundation of a christian doctrine; for all christian doctrines ought to be supported by plain, unequivocal declarations of scripture, such as the testimony of *Jesus* and his *Apostles*. Though prophecy can have but one certain and definite meaning, yet in the wonderful arrangements of providence under the divine government, which comprehends all times and events in one perfect system, predictions may be found applicable to, and strikingly illustrative of events which were not referred to when they were first penned.

nent arguments, contains strong grounds of argunent against that notion.

1. The Prophet expresses (v. 4.) the opinion which his own nation would entertain, as to the cause of the sufferings of Christ, 'We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted,' or as LOWTH reads, 'We thought him judicially stricken:' i. e. we thought he suffered from the hand of justice, uuder the divine displeasure. This opinion was entertained by the Jewish people, when Jesus hung on the cross; they treated with contempt the idea of his being an object of divine approbation, and supposed he must be under the displeasure of God, or he would not have been left to fall into such ignominy and suffering. This *Isaiah* states as an erroneous opinion, and shows that all his sufferings were occasioned by the wickedness of men. that he suffered to recover them from their iniquities. Yet the same erroneous opinion is still maintained by the advocates for the popular notion of atonement, like the unbelieving Jews, they suppose that he was judicially stricken, that he suffered from the hand of God, under the wrath of the Almighty, and was slain by the sword of divine justice. It follows that either they, or the Prophet, must be mistaken.

2. It is said (v. 7.) 'he was oppressed, and (v. 8.) he is said to be taken off by an oppressive judgment; (*Lowth*) but what is suffered from the hand of justice cannot be oppression, any more than oppression can be justice. Our opponents suppose that Christ

was taken off by the hand of justice, that divine justice demanded his life, that he suffered nothing but what justice required he should suffer as the substitute of sinners: but if so, how could it with truth be said that he was oppressed, and by an oppressive judgment taken off? The nature of things must change before justice and oppression can be the same. Yet the Prophet says 'he was oppressed:' the conclusion seems unavoidable, i. e. that his sufferings did not proceed from the hand of justice, that justice did not require his life should be taken away.

3. The Prophet speaks of Christ's bearing our sicknesses as well as our sins; for so the 4th v. is explained, Matt. viii. 17. and his bearing our sicknesses and infirmities, is explained as meaning the removal of them; not the infliction of the diseases of the people upon him. He healed them by the divine power which God had given him; not by suffering the disorders of those he healed: yet his removing the infirmities and sicknesses of the people, by his power, is called taking their infirmities and bearing their sicknesses: why then should his bearing the sins of men be supposed to mean their sins being imputed to him, and his bearing the punishment due to them? ought it not rather to be understood to intend his delivering them from their sins? Why should the word *bore* have a meaning affixed to it in the latter case, different from what is acknowledged to be its sense in the former?

4. (v. 11.) The Prophet refers his bearing the sins of many to his actually justifying them. 'By

his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many: for he shall bear their iniquities.' The plain meaning is, the knowledge he shall communicate to them, by the gospel, shall justify them, or make them righteous characters; for he shall, by that knowledge, bear away, or remove their iniquities from them. So the priests under the law were said to bear the iniquity of the sanctuary, &c. and the scape-goat to bear the sins of the people. It is very evident neither the jewish priests, nor the scape-goat, bore the punishment due to the people for their sins; but it was the way which God appointed for the removal of sin, by manifesting his mercy to the people, and leading them to purity. Unless these arguments can be refuted it will be in vain to seek for any proof of the doctrine of satisfaction in the fifty-third chap. of Isaiah; for our opponents will not suppose the Prophet to contradict himself.

Secondly. I will examine those parts of the chapter which are supposed to favor the doctrine I oppose.

It is said (v. 5.) 'He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed:' hence it is taken for granted by our opponents, that the Prophet speaks of Christ's being wounded and bruised by divine justice, through the wrath of God being poured out upon him, and that his wounds and bruises were the punishment of sin: but this ought not to be concluded without full proof, and it is incapable of proof, be-

cause no such thing is said in the passage, nor any where else in the Bible. All that the words clearly convey is that he was wounded and bruised on account of our iniquities, or that he suffered to promote the removal of sin, or that our sins, in some way or other, occasioned his wounds and bruises; but this is very different to the supposition that his holy Father poured out his wrath upon him, that he was slain by the sword of divine justice, and suffered the punishment due to sinners.

1. The wicked principles and dispositions, which reigned in the hearts of men, influenced them to wound and bruise the Son of God, of whom an Apostle declared they were the murderers. It was by transgressing every rule of equity, by the most iniquitous proceedings, that they effected his condemnation and crucifixion. Had not *they* violated every principle of justice, and been guilty of the most complicated iniquity in their proceedings against him, Pilate, convinced of his innocence, would have acquitted him: consequently he owed all his wounds and bruises to the transgressions and iniquities of men. Without any violence, the passage we are examining may be construed to mean that his wounds and bruises proceeded from the wickedness of men, as such their sense is in contrast with the erroneous opinion of the Jews, that he was smitten judicially: such a contrast seems evidently intended by the Prophet.

2. Such was Christ's love of righteousness, and his hatred of iniquity, that he could not behold sin

without having his feelings deeply wounded: hence, when he saw the temple made a house of merchandize, the words were found applicable to him, 'The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up:' and hence the grief which he felt for the hardness of heart which he saw in the Jews. Such was his benevolence, sympathy, and compassion, that he could not behold the sin and misery of creatures without being greatly agitated: witness his tears of commiseration when contemplating the impending fate of his most inveterate enemies, the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Extensive as his views were of the iniquities of mankind, and the miseries consequent upon them, could his feelings, filled as he was with holiness and love, fail to be deeply wounded on account of these things? Would not his eye affect his heart? his knowledge of the state of men increase his sorrow? could he fail to be afflicted in all their afflictions? If it be true, that the soul of righteous *Lot* was vexed day by day with seeing and hearing the unlawful deeds of the men of Sodom—that what *Jeremiah* saw of the sins and miseries of his people, so affected his sympathetic heart, as to make him exclaim, *Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow*—that the righteous in the days of *Ezekiel* were so wounded with what they saw that they sighed and cried continually for the abominations done in Jerusalem—and that every virtuous and benevolent heart is wounded for the sufferings of others—how much more must *he*, whose views were so comprehensive, whose soul was so pure, whose heart was so full of

tenderness and love, be, figuratively, wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities? Under these views the sufferings of his soul may be considered as occasioned by the sins of men, the effect they had upon his exquisitely virtuous and sympathetic feelings.

3. The Father permitted Christ to be wound d and bruised, and he patiently submitted to it, in pursuance of the great object he had before him, the salvation of men. Because he suffered to confirm the gospel, and give the plainest manifestation of the love of God to men, by which we are brought to the enjoyment of peace, and healed in a moral sense, it may be said, 'The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.' His sufferings have opened to us the way of peace, as he endured them in bringing the gospel to men, and to ratify it. His stripes, in connexion with the whole of his ministry and work, are instrumental in our recovery: for (1.) he was made perfect as the captain of our salvation through sufferings, qualified to be a faithful and merciful high priest in things pertaining to God, to effect reconciliation for the sins of the people, by subduing their enmity and bringing them nigh to God. (2.) His finished obedience was necessary in order to his receiving the power and authority requisite for the removal of sin and its effects; but the obedience which God required of him could not be compleated without his patiently enduring all the sufferings inflicted on him by wicked men, even the death of the cross. (Phil. ii. 8, 9.)

(3.) It is by the knowledge and reception of the truth and grace which are come to us by Jesus Christ that we are saved, by a clear perception of the love of God that we are influenced to love and obedience: and it was by his death the truth and grace which came by him received full confirmation, and the love of God was manifested. Thus it behoved Christ to suffer all the wounds and bruises inflicted upon him, for the removal of transgression and iniquity from men, through the preaching of repentance and forgiveness of sins in his name, i. e. on the ground of the authority which he hath received as the reward of his obedience: but all this has nothing to do with his making satisfaction to divine justice for the sins of men.

When we read, (v. 6.) 'The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all,' we are under no necessity of supposing the words to mean that the sins of men were imputed to him, and the punishment due to them inflicted on him. Because they do not necessarily convey such a meaning: and because, in other parts of the Old Testament, where the same or similar forms of expression occur, the imputation of sin, and the infliction of punishment, is not intended, our opponents themselves being judges. As (1.) when the *jewish priests* were appointed by God to bear the iniquity of the sanctuary, no one supposes that God imputed to them crimes of which they were innocent, nor that they were punished in the place and stead of others; but that the work of cleansing the sanctuary, preserving it pure, and of bringing the

people near to God, in his own appointed way, was the whole of what was intended by their bearing the sins of others. As (2.) when the sins of the whole congregation were laid upon the *scape-goat*, to which the passage we are examining seems to be an allusion, there certainly was neither a transfer of guilt, for the goat was incapable of feeling guilt, nor any infliction of punishment; but it was God's way of assuring the people of his mercy, of removing sin from them, and of stimulating them to obedience. As (3) when the Prophet *Ezekiel* bore the sins of the house of Israel, and the house of Judah: (Ezek iv. chap.) no one can suppose that he was either charged with, or punished for their crimes. The words 'The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all,' being a jewish form of expression. ought to be taken to mean the same in this place as in other parts of the jewish scriptures, where it is applied to similar subjects; but if this be admitted, it will follow that it has nothing to do with the imputation of guilt to the innocent, nor with the punishment of the innocent in the place of the guilty: the plain meaning will be that God hath laid on Christ the great work of bearing away our iniquities from us, by actually delivering us from sin and its effects. It certainly is of the greatest importance for us to know, that God hath raised up his Son Jesus to be a Savior, that he hath sent him to save the world, that he hath given him sufficient power and authority to accomplish this work, that repentance and remission of sins are preached to us in his name, that he is able to save

unto the uttermost all who come unto God by him; in a word, that the *Most High* hath laid on him the whole management of every thing which relates to sin, whether it be to pardon and save, or to punish and restore; ond that he commanded him fully to make known, patiently to suffer, and perfectly to fulfil, every thing necessary for the effecting the entire removal of sin, and all its painful consequences, and the compleat re-establishment of reconciliation, purity and happiness, throughout the creation. I am not afraid to challenge any of our opponents to find a meaning in the words, more full, or more important, more worthy of God, more honorable to Christ, or more interesting to men, than what this statement contains.

The 10. v. is insisted on by our opponents as favorable to their hypothesis. 'It pleased the LORD to bruise him, he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, &c.' The point in dispute respecting this passage is not whether Christ was really bruised, put to grief, and his soul, or life, made an offering for, or on account of sin; for all this is granted on our side: neither is it whether it pleased JEHOVAH to bruise him, and put him to grief, in the sense in which such expressions are used in the Old Testament: we know he could not have been bruised had it not been the pleasure of JEHOVAH to leave him in the hands of those who bruised him; nor put to grief, had *he* not placed him in such a situation as subjected him to grief; nor his

life made an offering, had he not left him to fall a victim; all these things are granted. But the point in dispute is, in what way JEHOVAH put him to grief, &c. Our opponents say, it was by imputing to him all our sins, pouring out upon him the wrath due to sinners, and punishing him in their place and stead: this we deny, because it is not what the Prophet hath said, the words not necessarily implying any such thing, and because it would contradict other things plainly expressed in the chapter: and we urge that this passage is to be explained in the same way as many other passages in the Old Testament, in which God is said to do what he only permits to be done, or what his dispensations and operations occasion men to do; but in which he is not the immediate actor.

That man can have paid but little attention to the scriptures, in particular to the Old Testament, who has not observed, that not only what God strictly and properly does, but what he suffers to be done, is ascribed to, and said to be done by him; because every circumstance is under the control of his overruling and all directing hand, and because he suffers nothing to take place but what he will make subservient to some wise and benevolent purpose. Again, what the dispensations of God, and the operations of his hand, occasion to take place, through the evil principles and dispositions of men, is ascribed to and said to be done by him, though had the hearts of men been less evil, and their conduct less corrupt, no

such effects would have been produced by the divine dispensations and operations. For instance——

1. Joseph told his brethren that God sent him before them into Egypt; yet God neither told him to go, nor his brethren to sell him to the merchants who carried him thither; his father's love, and the dreams which he had, ought not to have inspired them with such envy and hatred as influenced them to sell their brother: yet God knew the circumstances would so operate, and, under the superintendance of his providence, suffered them to take place, that he might place Joseph in Egypt for his own gracious purposes: consequently, Joseph said God sent him thither, though he could mean no more than that, in the course of his providence, he conducted him thither. Again. Joseph said, 'Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good;' i. e. God suffered their evil thoughts towards their brother to operate, and brought good to pass through the evil they intended, therefore all that befel Joseph is ascribed to him. So wicked men hated Christ; *they bruised him, and put him to grief, and slew him;* their hatred and murderous conduct was occasioned by what he said and did in the name of his Father, though what he said and did ought to have led them to a very different spirit and conduct; hence God is said to have bruised him, &c. 1. Because he suffered sinners to do it. 2. Because he placed him in such a situation, and engaged him in such a work, as unavoidably exposed him to all his sufferings. 3. Because the work he gave him to do was the occasion of all he

suffered. 4. Because he commanded him patiently to suffer, even to the laying down of his life. And 5. Because he intended to make his sufferings subservient to the most important interests of mankind. In this way Peter shows (Acts iii. 18.) God fulfilled the things which he had foretold by his Prophets Christ should suffer: consequently, it was in this way, and not by imputing our sins to, and pouring out his wrath upon him, that Jehovah bruised him, &c.

2. God was said to harden Pharoah's heart, because his merciful dispensations, in warning and still sparing him, when ripe for destruction, were the occasion, of his becoming more obdurate and stout against the LORD; though the divine conduct towards him ought to have had a very different effect. So when the Lord of the vineyard sent his beloved Son to those husbandmen the Jews, it was natural for him to say, *Surely they will reverence my Son;* not *Surely they will murder him.* When the Jews heard the words, and saw the works of Christ they ought to have reverenced and obeyed him; but such was their pride and obstinacy, that his words, which were calculated to save them, irritated them to such a degree, that they became his betrayers and murderers: and because God suffered them to do it, and the business on which he sent his Son occasioned their doing it, therefore he is said to have bruised him, &c.

3. When God is said to bid a wicked spirit go and prosper in the work of lying and deceiving, (1 Kings, 22. chap.) the divine character forbids our supposing

more to be intended than that he would suffer it to be done, and over-rule it for his own righteous purposes. So, in the passage we are examining, God is said to bruise Christ, &c. because he would suffer him to be bruised, and over-rule it for the accomplishment of his own gracious designs.

4. When God is said to create darkness and evil, to do evil, &c. by the sacred writers, we cannot suppose them to mean that darkness proceeds from him who is light, and with whom there is no darkness at all; or that evil can literally flow from him who is infinitely good; but that he so orders things in the course of his providence, that, in consequence of the wickedness of men, darkness and evil arise, and are made subservient to his wise and benevolent purposes. Even so, because he so ordered things that his Son Jesus fell a victim through the wickedness of men, and he will make his death subservient to the removal of sin, he is said to have made his soul, or life, an offering for sin.

Thirdly. As our opponents build their arguments upon detached words and sentences of scripture, I shall take the liberty of shewing that the particular expressions in this chapter, which they press into their service, are capable of a meaning different from that given by our Translators. It is with some reluctance I attempt this, because I wish not to go beyond the reach of the common reader, and because I am convinced that neither the salvation of mankind, nor any essential doctrine of christianity depends on this or that particular rendering of detached words

and sentences, in the jewish scriptures; yet so long as the advocates for reputed Orthodoxy, leaving the broad ground of reason and unequivocal scripture facts, choose to found their arguments on detached passages, which are capable of different renderings, and to support what they deem an essential article of faith by the popular version of ambiguous phrases, it may be useful to show the fallacy of their method, by exhibiting a different sense of such phrases.

Verse 5. *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*

The Heb. prefix, *Mem*, here rendered *for*, may mean *from*, or *by*. *Mr. Bate* says it denominates the instrument of an action, by which it is done. The word translated *transgressions* signifies actions in which justice is passed by, the rules of right broken through. That rendered *iniquities* may mean *perversion, perverseness, depravity*, as properly as *iniquity*. That translated *bruised* may mean, *crushed, humbled*, or *oppressed*. (See *Parkhurst's* Heb. Lexicon, and *Bate's* Critica Hebræa.) It follows that the meaning of the Prophet may be that Christ received his wounds *from* or *by* the unjust treatment of the Jews, and that his humiliation, or the crushing him to the dust, was brought about by their depravity, or perversions, i. e. by their perverting his words and actions, and all the rules of law and justice, to procure his destruction. I will not be confident that I have discovered the true sense, for it would be wrong to

be confident in a case were words are capable of different renderings; but it is sufficient for my purpose to say that the passage will, without violence, bear the sense I have given it, that it agrees with the facts as they actually took place, and the context, in which the Prophet, personating his countrymen, says, *we thought him judicially smitten*, which he states as an erroneous opinion, and, consequently, when describing the real cause of his sufferings may be expected to attribute them to some other cause than justice.

The chastisement of our peace was upon him. The word, *Musar*, here translated *chastisement*, will bear a very different rendering, 'It may' says a learned Friend, 'be derived from *Masar*, *tradere*, to deliver from one to another, *to teach*, or from *Joser*, *to discipline*, *to teach*. DR. TAYLOR, in his Heb. concordance, derives it from the last; and, from the instances which occur under *Joser*, it appears that *to teach* is no uncommon meaning. According to him it means this in the following passages. Job iv. 3. Psa. ii. 10. & xvi. 7. Pro. i. 2—7. & ix. 7. & xxiii. 23. Isa. viii. 11. & xxviii. 26. Jer. vi. 8. Ezek. xxiii. 48. Jer. ii. 19. Job xl. 2. Deut. viii. 5. Pro. xxxi. 1. and in several others which it is needless to mention.'

The Greek Interpreters seem to have considered the term as bearing that signification in the passage in question, when they rendered it, ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑ ειρηνης ημων επ' αυτον.

The word which the Syriac version has in this

place, according to *Castel*, has no such meaning as *chastisement*; but signifies, among many other things, *instruction*.

'The Targum of Jonathan has a very curious interpretation of the whole chapter, the clause of the verse in which the term under examination occurs, is thus rendered, '*Et in doctrinâ ejus multiplicabitur pax super nos.*'

LEIGH says that *Musar* signifies both chastening and teaching.

PAGNINUS (in his Lexicon Hebraicum) gives *Eruditio* as one sense of the word: and SCHINDLERUS *Institutio*.

The LXX. have generally rendered *Musar* by παιδεια, and at other times by words which have relation to instruction. Our Translators also have frequently rendered it *instruction*, as may be seen by comparing the translation with the original in the following places. Pro. i. 2, 3, 7, 8. & iv. 1, 13. & v. 12, 23. & vi. 23. & viii. 10, 33. & xii. 1. & xiii. 1, 18. & xv. 5. & xix. 20, 27. & xxiii. 12, 23. & xxiv. 32. Jer. xvii. 23. & xxxii. 33. & xxxv. 13. Zeph. iii. 7. Once at least they have rendered it doctrine, Jer. x. 8.

Hence it appears that we have good authority to render the clause in question, *the instruction of our peace was upon him*, i. e. the work of teaching those things which lead us to the enjoyment of peace.

With the foregoing construction of the words the latter clause, *and with his stripes we are healed*, will very well accord; for if he exposed himself to, and

patiently endured, all the cruel treatment of wicked men, that he might fully teach mankind the way of peace, and that what he taught might be confirmed to the world, it is easy to perceive how we are healed by his stripes.

Verse 6.—*The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

The persons here spoken of are the Jews, and cannot, when the passage is referred to Christ, mean any other people; for they are the people personated by the Prophet, nor can the account at large be shown to be applicable to any other: it was they only who, when he was suffering, hid their faces from him, despised him, thought him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted: it follows that it is of the iniquity of the Jews he here speaks. The word rendered *iniquity*, as observed before, may mean *perverseness*, or *depravity*. That translated *hath laid* may mean *hath caused to light*.* It follows that the sense of the passage may be, that Jehovah engaged him in such a work, and placed him in such circumstances, as rendered him offensive to the Jews, and occasioned their venting all their perverseness and depravity upon him. This exposition agrees with what immediately follows, which is evidently a description of the cruel treatment he received at the hands of the Jews, and the patience with which he endured it.

* See LOWTH in Loc.

Verse 8.—*For the transgression of my people was he stricken.*

The prefix *Mem*, here rendered *for*, as noted before, may mean *from*, or *by*. The word rendered *transgression*, conduct in which justice is passed by, i. e. *injustice*. The people spoken of must be the Jews, for either the phrase, *my people*, must mean the Prophet's own nation, or God's people, and in either cases none but the jewish nation can be intended; they only were distinguished with the name of God's people in the days of Isaiah, and even in the days of Christ. The words may be rendered, *by the injustice of my people was he stricken.*

Verse 10.—*Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him.* The word here rendered *to bruise*, may mean *to humble:* as a noun it means *humiliation:* and it certainly was the pleasure of *Jehovah* that his Son Jesus should pass through a state of humiliation, to fit him for the dignity and glory to which he is since exalted. *He hath put him to grief:* i. e. placed him in afflictive circumstances, and commanded him patiently to endure his sufferings.

When thou shall make his soul an offering for sin. The Hebrew word, here translated *an offering for sin*, is variously rendered by our translators. Though they have sometimes translated it sin-offering, or trespass-offering, they have frequently rendered it by the terms *guilty*, *trespass*, *sin*, several times *desolate*, and in several instances they have construed it to mean *an offence:* consequently, according to the various senses they have given it, the clause we are ex-

amining, may mean that Christ was made guilty, or made sin, i. e. according to the Hebrew idiom, was viewed and treated as a guilty person, and we know he was so viewed and treated by the Jews; or it may mean that he was made *desolate*, or made *an offence*; for they judged the word susceptable of these various meanings: it cannot necessarily mean a sin-offering; for that is not its uniform meaning. If it mean a sin-offering it must be because the context determines that to be the sense; but in the present instance the context leads to no such construction; for there is no mention of either priest, or altar, or any thing belonging to the sacrificature. The most probable sense I conceive to be, that if, on the one hand, he should become offensive, and be treated as a guilty person, on the other, he should see seed, prolong days, and the pleasure of the LORD should prosper in his hand: that the vile manner in which he was treated; instead of defeating, should contribute to his future greatness, and promote the designs of Jehovah which he was appointed to execute. In this I may be mistaken; but I recommend the re-examination of the passage to those who have a critical knowledge of the original. I apprehend the sense I have given to be agreeable to the context. In chap. lii. 13, 14, 15. a contrast is made between the vile treatment he received and his subsequent greatness. In the preceding part of this chap. his sufferings from the hands of men are all along described, and I know of no reason for supposing that a new subject is introduced in the 10th verse.

Verse 11.—*He shall bear their iniquities.* This clause DODSON reads, *their iniquities he shall bear away*, and says ‘ This is an exact translation of the original, and it is agreeable to the version of the LXX. Και τας αμαρτιας αυτων αυτος ανοισει. Coverdale's version in 1550, is thus ‘ FOR HE SHALL BEARE AWAY their synnes,’ TINDAL'S version is, ‘ *He shall beare awaye their sinnes.*’ The sense of the verse seems to be that by the knowledge which he would communicate, by his teaching, many should be made righteous, for what he taught should remove their sins: i. e. save them from the guilt, power, and practice of sin.

Verse 12.—*And he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.* His being numbered with the transgressors, either relates to his being treated by the Jews as if he had been a real offender, or to his being crucified with thieves. His bearing the sin of many, I apprehend, intends his supporting under, and patiently enduring, all the wicked conduct of the Jews towards him. The word here translated *bare*, is not the same that occurs in the preceding verse. It would bear to be rendered *bare with*: and we know that Christ bare with all the wickedness of the people in his day: he did more, he made intercession for the transgressors. This seems evidently to refer to his praying for his murderers with his dying breath.*

* All that I attempt, by these references to the original, is to

On the whole it appears that this chapter, whether explained as it stands in the common translation, or critically examined as it stands in the original, furnishes no proof that the death of Christ was foretold as a vicarious sacrifice; on the contrary it represents it in a light incompatible with that notion, by describing it as occasioned by the violence and iniquity of men: and those verses which have been supposed to favor the popular notion of atonement, are found, when compared with other parts of the sacred writings, to have a very different meaning, more in unison with the import of the chapter at large.

DANIEL, is the next Prophet who foretold the death of Christ. He says, chap. ix. 26. *And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.* Taking these words as a prophecy of Christ the sense is obvious, they teach that his death would be violent, but not on account of any crime of his own: it follows that he would be cut off through the wickedness of others. More than this cannot fairly be collected from the passage, and this can have nothing to do with his dying in the place of others.

Our opponents refer to another passage in this Prophet. chap. ix. 24. *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, to finish the*

show that the words, on which our opponents rest their hypothesis, do not *necessarily* mean what they insist on as their indubitable sense: if I have done this, it follows that their arguments are founded on equivocal terms.

transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. Without attempting a critical examination of this passage, suffice it to say, that it evidently relates to the Jews, Daniel's people, and to them only; this is plainly expressed by the *phrases thy people*, and *thy holy city:* consequently the transgression, &c. can intend only the transgression of that people. It is probable this prophecy relates to the restoration of the Jews, the termination of the divine judgments on them for their sins, and their establishment in a permanent state of righteousness. Not to insist on this, if it be supposed to relate to the work of Christ, it must be explained consistently with reason. and other parts of the sacred writings. What relates to transgression is not finished until all its effects cease; an end is not made of sin so long as the creature continues the subject of it; nor reconciliation made for iniquity any further than sinners are brought to GOD; nor everlasting righteousness brought in only as men are made radically virtuous. These considerations are sufficient to show the absurdity of supposing the prophecy was accomplished in the death of Christ merely. To give the words any rational exposition, in reference to his death, they must be construed to mean that he by introducing the gospel, and ratifying it with his blood, hath laid a foundation for the removal of sin, the reconciliation of sinners to God, and the establishment of mankind in a permanent state of righteousness. To this exposition we have but one objec-

tion, i. e. it appears by no means to be the meaning of the Prophet.

ZECHARIAH is supposed to have foretold the death of Christ. chap. xiii. 7 *Awake O sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts : smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered.* From these words it has been inferred that Christ was slain by the sword of divine justice ; but when examined they will be found to have no such meaning. The wicked are in scripture called God's sword ; (Psa. xvii. 13,) and by wicked men Jesus was slain. He quoted the words and applied them to himself in reference to his being apprehended and put to death by wicked men. Mat. xxvi. 31. Judicial power is frequently designated by a sword ; and it was by a gross abuse of judicial power Christ was condemned. The Jews professed to cut him off by the sword of justice ; but his condemnation and execution were notoriously unjust and cruel. As the sword which smote Christ evidently means wicked men, who exerted all their authority to destroy a righteous person, either all they did to him was just, and they were falsely accused when charged with murdering him, or he was not slain by the sword of justice, God is said to bid the sword awake and smite him, because he suffered his enemies to cut him off. After all two things may be questioned, 1. Whether Christ did more than accommodate the words of the Prophet to his own case. 2. Whether, taking the passage as a real prediction of his death, any more be intended by it than that wick-

ed men *would* smite him; for God is sometimes said to bid persons do what he neither, literally, commissions nor authorises to be done. 1 Kings xxii. 22.

On the whole it may be observed, that, if we except a few passages in the Psalms, there are but three Prophets, in the Old Testament, who said any thing relative to the death of Christ. One of them, *Zechariah*, if the passage be not merely accommodated to him, simply foretold that he should be smitten by wicked men. Another, *Daniel*, merely prophecied that he should be cut off, but not for any crime of his own. The other, *Isaiah*, is supposed to have foretold his sufferings and death, in a more particular manner than any other Hebrew writer. But it may be questioned whether these prophecies were so understood prior to his sufferings. Our Lord's own disciples did not understand them to refer to him; for they did not believe that the true Messiah would die. The Ethiopian Nobleman, though a devout proselyte to judiasm, when reading what is thought the plainest of them, did not understand to whom it referred: and if the Prophets were not understood when they foretold the death of Jesus, it is impossible his death should be a ground of hope to any one before his coming. If, however, these predictions were understood of the promised Messiah, from the time they were first delivered, it will by no means follow that any idea would be formed that his death would be vicarious; for the Jews would necessarily understand the phrases in Isaiah, in the sense in which they were used in the law, and that Christ's bearing

sin could mean no more than his removing it, by revealing pardon and leading the people to purity; as their own priests, and the scape-goat were said to bear sins. Thus it appears that nothing can be found in the Old Testament which countenances the notion of Christ's making satisfaction for sin, at least it is evident that Moses and the Prophets were strangers to that notion.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

On Sacrifices.

THE origin of sacrifices is involved in much obscurity. Whether they were first instituted and commanded by the Almighty, or were voluntary offerings, arising from a sense of dependance and feelings of gratitude in the creature, we are no where told. There can be no authority for saying they were first instituted by God; for the scriptures are silent on this point, and the silence of scripture ought to be respected. Convinced they owed every thing to God, the earliest generations of men, under the influence of gratitude, might be led to present their offerings, as an acknowledgement to him; and he, when he approved of their character and conduct, might cause lightning to descend and consume what they presented, as a token of his acceptance of them and their gifts. This hypothesis is agreeable to the earliest accounts we have of sacrifices.

Gen. iv. 3, 4, 5.—*And in process of time it came to pass that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering to the LORD: and Abel he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof And the LORD had respect unto Abel, and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.*

Had the first sacrifices been of divine institution, it is reasonable to suppose, directions would have been given respecting what should be offered; but, according to the above account, each person seems left to present what he thought most proper. The word rendered offering may mean a present, or voluntary gift.* God is said to have respect to Abel, and then to his offering; and to disapprove of Cain, and then of his offering: which leads to the idea that the offering was accepted, or rejected, according to the character of him who presented it, and that the acceptance, or rejection, of the offering was a testimony of the acceptance, or rejection, of the person who offered it. This idea is substantiated by what the LORD said to Cain, verse 7. *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted:* this shows that the acceptance of the sacrifice depended on the moral character of the worshipper. It is further supported by what is said, Heb. xi. 4. *By faith Abel offered unto GOD a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, GOD testifying of his gifts:* this shows that God's acceptance of his sacrifice was a testimony to the goodness of his character. There is not the least proof that Abel presented his offering in consequence of any sin he had committed, for he was already righteous; nor is it intimated that his sacrifice was an expression of his guilt and demerit; but it is plainly asserted that

* The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews calls Abel's offering *his gifts*. Chap. xi. 4.

its acceptance was an evidence of his righteousness: hence it follows that the first acceptable sacrifice we read of was connected, not with sin, but with righteousness. It has been supposed that the reason why Abel and his offering were accepted, while Cain and his offering were rejected, was because the former offered a bloody sacrifice, and looked through it to another and a better sacrifice; but that the latter brought a different kind of offering, and presented it without having any regard to the future sacrifice of the promised seed. This supposition takes for granted what is incapable of proof, i. e. that bloody sacrifices were offered before the flood: it also implies what is quite unreasonable, i. e. that Cain ought to have offered what he did not possess; nor is the least fault found with what he offered, but with the spirit in which he did it; it is his character that is disapproved; it even assumes an impossibility, i. e. that in presenting his offering he ought to have had regard, to an event of which he could not have the most distant thought, as it was not foretold until near three thousand years after. The faith by which Abel offered his sacrifice is not said to consist in his believing that another should die in his place and stead, but in his believing that God is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Heb. xi. 6. We have no account of any sacrifices but those of Cain and Abel being offered before the flood.

We find no account of any command being given to Noah and his family after the flood respecting sacrifices. So far as we can discover, his sacrifice,

mentioned, Gen. viii. 20. might be quite a voluntary offering, intended to express gratitude and subjection to the Deity: this is the more probable because the sacrifices of the Gentiles seem not to have been founded on any divine institution; but on the views and reasonings which obtained among them. Had bloody sacrifices been instituted at the time blood was prohibited, Gen. ix. 4. it is reasonable to suppose, its use on the altar would have been mentioned as one reason why it ought not to be eaten, as it was afterwards by Moses. Noah's Sacrifice could not be intended to constitute him a righteous person; *for* God said to him, long before, *Thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.* Gen. vii. 1. Its object could not be the deprecating of the divine wrath, or the covering of him and his family from the vengeance of heaven, for then it should have been offered before the flood; but it was not till the destruction of the old world was over, and they found themselves secure from the ravages of the flood, that he offered it. From the whole account it seems most probable that Noah was led to offer it from a sense of the obligations he was under to God, and to express his gratitude for the divine favor. The covenant which God made with Noah, and all flesh, was not confirmed by sacrifice, probably, because the practice of confirming covenants over dead victims had not yet obtained.

It is evident the writer of the book of Job supposed sacrifices to be presents, the acceptance of which betokened approbation and favor, and that God ac-

cepted men's persons on the ground of moral excellence. chap. xlii. 7, 8. Which passage teacheth that a man's person must be acceptable to God before he will receive an offering at his hand; an idea directly opposite to the popular notion that those whom he disapproves are rendered acceptable to him by sacrifice. The Almighty is represented as saying that he would accept Job, but not accept his friends because they had not spoken of him the thing which is right, as he had done.

Some ages after we find covenants confirmed by sacrifices. The first time any thing like this presents itself to view is in the days of Abraham: Gen. 15 chap. when the covenant which God gave to him seems to have been confirmed over the dead bodies of sacrifieed animals. The covenant between Laban and Jacob appears to have been confirmed by a sacrifice. Gen. xxxi. 54.

The offering which Abraham proposed making of his son Isaac appears in the light of a gift, or present; for the LORD said to him, *Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld from me thy son, &c.* In this instance he showed his readiness to present what was most dear to him as a tribute due to the Almighty.

Thus it appears that sacrifices were offered long before we have any account of their divine institution: we must account for their existence in the best manner we can. We have no account of their institution, as a regular appendage to the worship of God prior to the giving of the law. In one or two instan-

they were commanded before that time; but
t as a regular or necessary part of divine worship:
nerally, it seems, the faithful worshipped without
her sacrifice or offering: and we find they existed
es before we read of any command being given re-
ive to them. We can discover nothing concern-
g them in the earliest times but that they were of-
ed as a tribute of gratitude, or an expression of de-
ndance and subjection, and that their being ac-
pted was regarded as a manifestation of approba-
n and favor. In later ages they were considered
giving a religious sanction to covenants and en-
gements. This seems to be the whole of what can
known concerning them prior to the jewish insti-
tion.

Properly to understand many of the ordinances of
oses, it may be necessary to consider the peculiar
ation in which God was supposed to stand to the
use of Israel; as their king and governor: the
iests and levites, were regarded as his houshold
d ministers among them: the tythes and offerings
re a kind of tribute to him, in the particular cha-
cter of their national king, and formed the chief
ovision made for the tribe of Levi, who were to be
nstantly employed about the service of the taber-
cle. To argue from the particular œconomy of
e Jews, which was founded on very peculiar cir-
mstances, and local relations, what must be the
ndamental doctrines of the gospel, which has no-
ing to do with those peculiarities, or local rela-
ns, but rests upon the broadest principles of divine

wisdom, goodness and mercy, would be very absurd: it would be like arguing from the discipline of the nursery to the government of a mighty empire.

Another idea which associates itself with the jewish sacrifices is, that they were a continued confirmation of the covenant between God and the people. *When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people, according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people. Saying, this is the blood of the* (διαθηκη) *covenant which God hath enjoined unto you.* Heb. ix. 19, 20.

Hence another thought arises, which is very prominent in the levitical code, that their sacrifices were intended to bring them nigh to God, according to the tenor of the sinai covenant, and separate and cleanse them in a ceremonial way, as a peculiar people devoted to him: to confirm to them the promises of mercy and favor, contained in the law, and to impress on their minds the obligations they were under to adhere strictly to the faith and worship of the one God, and to obey him as their king.

Sacrifices and ceremonial worship had obtained general footing in the world, before they were established by divine institution, in the ministry of Moses. The design of the mosaic œconomy was to separate Israel from the idolatrous nations, and preserve them from their idolatrous practices: to this point the whole of their ritual service was directed. The designs of God were not at that time sufficiently ripened, nor the people prepared, for such a pure

nd spiritual worship as the gospel teaches: hence he sacrificature was imposed until the times of refornation, the people were placed under such a state of hings as was calculated to prepare them gradually or a more pure and perfect œconomy.

An idea arose among the Heathen that in offering nd partaking of the sacrifices they kept up an intercourse with the gods. To this Paul refers; 1 Cor. c. 20, 21. and hence the controversy among the irst christians about things offered to idols. The ame idea obtained among the Jews, their sacrifices vere considered as a medium of intercourse with the Almighty. To this reference seems to be made, Heb. xiii. 10. *We have an altar whereof they have no ight to eat, which serve the tabernacle:* i. e. they ave no claim to our way of access to God, opened y the gospel, who adhere still to the jewish œconomy.

That sacrifices never were absolutely essential to he worship and acceptable service of God, but only nade relatively essential, in the jewish code, in subervience to things of far greater importance, is clear rom the declarations of scripture. Psa. xl. 6. *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire——burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required.* Jer. vii. 22, 23. *I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the and of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices. But this thing I commanded them saying, obey ny voice.* These passages prove that sacrifices nev-

were appointed but in the subserviance to moral rectitude, as tests of obedience.

The Prophets speak of no intrinsic value, or virtue, in sacrifices abstractedly considered: they exalt repentance above them, and represent obedience as of far greater value. 1 Sam, xv. 22. *Hath the LORD as much delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice: and to hearken than the fat of rams.* They seldom insist on the necessity of sacrifices: sometimes they speak of them as useless, when offered by immoral persons as abominable, and always as being of no value any further than connected with moral purity. Isa. i. 11—13. *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me saith the LORD, I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of the he-goats. When ye come to appear before me who hath required this at your hand to tread my courts. Bring no more vain oblations.* Chap. lxvi. 3. *He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swines' blood.* On purity of heart, and rectitude of conduct, they lay the greatest stress: righteousness, goodness and mercy they insist on as things of the first importance. Isa. i. 16, 17. *Wash ye, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.* Verse 19. *If ye be willing and*

obedient ye shall eat the good of the land. If holiness, the great end of all positive institutes, be secured, about offerings and burnt-offerings, which were only means subordinate to that end, they seem not very anxiously to concern themselves. Micah vi. 6, 7, 8. *Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?* Such appears to have been the opinion of the ancient Prophets concerning sacrifices: they did not regard them as the foundation, and most essential parts of their religion; but only as auxiliaries, that were useless when they failed to promote piety, virtue and goodness, and an abomination when associated with moral turpitude, or obtruded into the place of justice and mercy. The word sacrifice has been used figuratively in all times, and by all nations: it is so used in several places in the Old Testament, David speaks of the sacrifices of a broken heart, of a broken and contrite spirit: Psa. li. 7. of the sacrifices of thanksgiving: Psa. cvii. 22. of the sacrifices of righteousness: Psa. iv. 5. and of sacrifices of joy. Psa. xxvii. 6.

In the New Testament the word sacrifice is used figuratively, as applied to various subjects. Christians

are called to present their bodies a living sacrifice. Rom. xii. 1. Paul speaks of his readiness to be offered upon the sacrifice, and service of the faith of his fellow christians: Phil. ii. 17. and he speaks of the liberality of the Philippians as a sacrifice acceptable and well pleasing to God. chap. iv. 18. Praise to God, and benevolence to men, are both called sacrifices. Heb. xiii, 15, 16. Peter speaks of christians offering up spiritual sacrifices. 1 Pet. ii. 5. It is not in the least surprising that the same writers should apply the word sacrifice in a figurative sense to Christ, and what he has done for the benefit of mankind.

When the Prophet Malachi predicted the discontinuance of the jewish sacrifices, and what should be substituted in their place among the Gentiles, Mal. i. 10, 11, he gave not the least hint that the sacrifice of Christ should be substituted in the place of the former, but mentions what the Gentiles themselves should offer as coming in the place of the jewish offerings: he uses such modes of expression as the former œconomy would suggest; but there can be no doubt that, by incense and a pure offering, he intends those sacrifices of praise, and of righteousness, which the true worshippers of God, in every place, present to him.

In this chapter I have barely stated a few general thoughts respecting sacrifices: to judge of their propriety the reader must give himself the trouble of searching the scriptures on the subject.

CHAPTER FIFTH.

Remarks on passages in the New Testament.

It is easy to refer to passages of scripture upon any point; but such a reference *merely* proves nothing: it is necessary the passages referred to should relate to the point in hand, in order to their furnishing proof. Could our opponents refer to passages in the writings of the Apostles in which their doctrine of atonement, or satisfaction, is expressly mentioned, it would be doing something to purpose; but, finding that impossible, they quote a number of texts which have nothing to do with the subject; and, by an arbitrary exposition of detached expressions, and a literal construction of figurative language, they conclude they have established their point. It will be sufficient for me at present to show that the passages they quote have nothing to do with the doctrine in support of which they quote them.

Matt. xx. 28. Mark x. 45. *The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many.* Having in another part of this work, explained the word ransom, as applied to Christ, I barely add, that the plain meaning of the above passages is, that he came to devote his life to the effecting of the salvation of men. 1 Tim. ii. 6. *Who gave himself a ransom for all:* i. e.

to effect the deliverance of all. These are the only places, in the New Testament, where the word ransom occurs: and these have no reference to Christ's giving God a price for our salvation; but to his dying to effect our deliverance by the gospel.*

Matt. xxvi. 28. *This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* The fact asserted in these words is plain, i. e. that Christ shed his blood to produce an important effect in the creature, to bring sinners to the enjoyment of forgiveness of sins, to cleanse their consciences. His saying 'my blood of the New Testament,' places his death before us as that which confirms the truth and grace revealed to us by the gospel. As he shed his blood to ratify the gospel, which communicates the knowledge of salvation by remission of sins, it is with the utmost propriety said, he shed his blood for the remission of sins.

John, i. 29. *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.* This passage simply speaks of Christ's taking away sin: and so far as sin is removed what the words express is accomplished. Though this is one of the passages which our oppo-

* 'The λυτρον, or *Ransom given*, is not any price paid to the person who detains us captives: but it signifies that which Christ did in order to obtain his end.'

'To *redeem* then does not imply the paying a price to the person holding us in captivity, but only the setting us at liberty from any slavery, or slavish state.'

DR. SYKES *on Redemption.* P. 149.

nents quote, they do not believe that sin will ever be completely taken away from the world; but we believe that both it, and all its painful consequences, will be entirely removed; how then can they bring this passage into argument against us? It is clear that sin never did exist any where but in the creature, that it can be taken away only from where it is, and that when taken away it does not remain: consequently, sin was not taken away merely by Christ's dying, for it still remains; and the taking it away cannot relate to God's receiving a consideration for the pardon of it, but to the creature's being actually freed from it. It is by the gospel Christ takes away the guilt, the power, the love, and the pollution of sin.

John, vi. 51. *The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* It may well be doubted whether, in this passage, Christ had any immediate reference to his sufferings, when it is remembered that the words are figurative, and occur in a highly figurative discourse. He was evidently speaking in figurative language when he said that the bread, which he called his flesh; came down from heaven, and was to be eaten by the person who derived life from it; for surely no one will say that the body of Christ, which was nailed to the tree, came down from heaven, or ever was eaten by any man. He seems throughout to be speaking of his heavenly doctrine, what was manifested in the flesh, (1 Tim. iii. 16.) or made known by his ministry, and was calculated to give life to the world. But if we let

our opponents take the passage in their own way, what can they make of it? Nothing in favor of their notion of atonement; for Jesus spoke not of giving his flesh to God, as a consideration for the pardon of sin, but of giving it to men, to be food for them, in a figurative sense. Say the words refer to his death, they can mean no more than that he would give himself to die that the world might receive life by his gospel.

John, x. 11. *I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.* Here Christ speaks of giving his life for his people, as a good shepherd would expose his life in defence of the sheep committed to his care. But could he not give his life for his people without giving God a consideration that he might not destroy them? The passage is highly figurative, and figurative passages ought to be explained agreeably to the allusions they contain. Was it common in those days for a shepherd to risk his life to preserve the sheep from being destroyed by the *owner*, who had intrusted them to his care? was it not rather to preserve them *for* the owner, from being destroyed by ravenous beasts, that he would expose his life? Before the words can be brought to countenance the modern notion of atonement, they must be detached from their connexion, the allusions they contain be lost sight of, and a forced construction given to them. Had David lost his life in rescuing the lamb from the lion and bear, (1 Sam. xvii. 34, 35,) would it not have been true that he gave his life for the lamb? Is not Christ's having deve-

ted his life, exposed himself to all his sufferings, even to a most painful and ignominious death, to effect the salvation of men by the gospel, and to make them partakers of all its blessings, the full import of the words, *the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep?* As he gave his life on our account, for our benefit, it must be true that he gave his life for us; and this is all that can fairly be gathered from the words.

John, xv. 12, 13. *This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.* That this passage should be brought in support of the notion of satisfaction for sins, is what we should not have expected, had we not found it among the texts referred to by our opponents in defence of their hypothesis: such a reference however only discovers a paucity of proofs, and cannot serve their cause; for if the words prove any thing, they prove too much for their purpose; if they prove that Christ's dying for us means his dying in our place, they equally prove that christians are commanded to die in the place of each other. He mentions his laying down his life, as an act similar to what any other man, in particular circumstances, might perform for his friends, and as the evidence of the reality and greatness of his love; and he commands his disciples to love one another in the same manner, and to the same degree, as he hath loved them. It follows that, if Christ's laying down

his life means his becoming a vicarious sacrifice, any person who lays down his life for his friends becomes a vicarious sacrifice; for he speaks of the circumstances as similar.

Acts, x. 43. *To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.* Peter declared, Acts iii. 16. That the name of Jesus, through faith in his name, had made the impotent man strong. He certainly did not mean that the lame man was cured through Christ's bearing his lameness in his place and stead; but that the power which Christ had given to his Apostles, to accredit the truth of the gospel, had effected this miraculous cure. Name, frequently signifies authority. The sense of the above passage seems to be, that through the authority which Christ hath received as a prince and a Savior, to dispense pardon, all who believe the gospel, shall receive the remission of sins.

Acts, xiii. 39. *And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses,* i. e. by the gospel of Jesus Christ all who believe with the heart unto righteousness receive the forgiveness of all their sins, even such sins as the law of Moses did not assure the penitent should be forgiven. It is by the gospel the sinner is justified; through the revelation which God hath afforded us by Jesus Christ, we receive the knowledge of salvation by remission of sins: hence it is said that the forgiveness of sins is preached to us through the man Jesus, also because he hath ratified

the proclamation of pardon, which he brought from God to men, by his own death, and is exalted to give repentance and remission of sins.

Acts, xx. 28. *Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.* Without remarking on the manifest absurdity of talking of the *blood of God*, or stopping to show that probably among the various readings of the text, the true sense may be 'Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with the blood of his own,'* meaning his own Son, it is sufficient at present to observe that God is said to be the purchaser, that the word purchased must be taken figuratively, and that the meaning is simply, the church of God which he hath acquired to himself at the expence of the sufferings and death of his Son.

Rom. iii. 24, 25. *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.*† This passage teaches the doctrine of free justification by the grace, or favor, of God, than which nothing can be more opposite tothe notion of satisfaction for sins. Redemption means actual deliverance; it is in Christ Jesus, as we have it revealed by him in the gospel: he is the medium through which it is made known and communicated: hence redemption

* WAKEFIELD reads, 'The church of God, which he gained for himself by his own son.' See also his note on the place.

† On this passage see SYKES *on Redemption*, P. 190— 196.

being in him cannot reasonably be understood to mean more than that he is the person whom God hath raised up and appointed to deliver us. The meaning of the word propitiation will be more fully shown in the next chapter: suffice it to say here that the word so rendered means a mercy-seat, and that this has been the opinion of learned and pious men of different parties among christians. God is said to have set Jesus Christ forth to be a mercy-seat, because he reveals his mercy to mankind by him.

To be a propitiation through faith in his blood. The words imply that Christ becomes a propitiation through our believing; but if the shedding of his blood made satisfaction for our sins, and this be what is meant by his being a propitiation, I see not how he can be said to become such through our believing, nor what dependance it can have on the faith of the sinner; for the satisfaction made must be the same whether men believe or not; on the contrary, if his becoming a propitiation intend his becoming, by the gospel, the medium of the divine mercy to us, then his being a propitiation to us is evidently connected with, and depends on, our believing; because we cannot receive the mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, by the gospel, until we believe. Believing the gospel is called faith in his blood, because the death of Christ was the finishing of his testimony, the confirmation of the truth and grace of God, the ratification of *that* by the belief of which we are saved.

To declare his righteousness. To make known God's way of justifying the ungodly, or of making sinners righteous persons, by freely forgiving their sins, and leading them to purity and holiness, through the faith of Jesus Christ. It is not said, to declare his righteousness by setting forth the death of his Son, as that which hath appeased his wrath, and satisfied his justice; yet this is what the notion of satisfaction requires to be said; but for the remission of sins. Remission of sin relates to, and takes place in the conscience of the sinner: it consists in the removal of guilt and condemnation from the mind, by the knowledge of the pardoning mercy and love of God. The sense of the passage seems to be, that God hath set forth his Son, in the gospel, as the medium by which he communicates his mercy to his guilty creatures, to show his readiness to forgive their sins freely, and restore them to the paths of virtue: that through the gospel they might have the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins.

Rom. iv. 25. *Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.* If Christ's being delivered for our offences be construed to mean that he died in our place and stead, it will follow that his being raised again for our justification intends his being raised in our place and stead. I conceive the meaning of the passage to be, either, that he was delivered, or given to men, in order to free them from their offences, or, that the offences of men occasioned his being delivered up to be crucified, and that God raised him again that by the teaching and

influence of his gospel sinners might be made righteous.

Rom. v. 6. *When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.* The Apostle here refers to the former state of the Gentiles, when they were without the gospel, which he declares to be the power of God unto salvation. (chap. i. 16.) In that state they had not strength to recover themselves from their ignorance and idolatry; Christ died to bring the gospel to them, fully confirmed, which affords all the strength, in a moral sense, necessary to make them holy and happy. The words have no reference to his dying as the substitute of the ungodly; but to his dying to give them strength to discover and do the will of God, and to attain the enjoyment of his favor: i. e. to extend and confirm to them all the privileges of the gospel.

V. 7, 8. *For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.* The reference here cannot be to one man's dying as the substitute of another, by being condemned and executed in his place; for no such proceeding was ever allowed by any human law, or suffered under any earthly government, consequently it was an impossibility; but to one man's exposing his life for the safety and benefit of another, which is possible, and has sometimes taken place: and as Christ is said to die for sinners in the same way as one man is capable of dying for another, substitution must be to-

tally out of the question; for, as one man cannot become a vicarious sacrifice for another, the comparison which the Apostle makes would be destroyed by the supposition that his dying for us means his becoming a vicarious sacrifice; it can only mean that he died for our safety and benefit.

V. 9. *Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him,* i. e. If God gave us such proof of his love, while yet in our sins, much more, now we have the forgiveness of sins confirmed to us by the death of Christ, we shall be saved from all future wrath by the influence of his teaching and example.

V. 10. *For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life,* The Gentiles who were far off, and, in consequence of their superstition and idolatry, stood in the light of enemies to God and his people, were made nigh by being brought under the dispensation of the gospel; and, having the knowledge of the true God extended to them, they no longer stood in the light of enemies: this is what is meant by their being reconciled to God: and as Christ, by his death, had broken down the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, and brought the latter nigh to God, by extending to them the advantages of the gospel, they are said to have been reconciled by his death. But the Apostle speaks of being saved by his life; which is contrary to the notion that Christ wrought out our salvation on the cross, and implies that it is by attention to his

teaching and example, to what appeared in his life, sinners are actually saved.

V. 11. *And not only so, but we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.* Having shown, in another place, that the word here translated atonement ought to be rendered reconciliation. I shall only add that this passage gives no countenance to the common notion of atonement, as it expresses nothing concerning God's receiving the atonement, nor of Christ's making atonement to divine justice; but man, and man only, is said to have received the atonement, or reconciliation.

V. 18. *As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.* The Apostle has evidently a reference, in this passage, to the sentence of death pronounced on our first parent after he sinned, and to the revelation of life and immortality by Jesus Christ: nor can more be proved by it than that as by the first man who sinned death entered, so by him who perfectly obeyed deliverance from death, and a state of immortality, were ascertained. The sense seems to be, that as in connexion with the sin of Adam the mortality of man was announced, so in connexion with the righteousness of Christ the resurrection of man from the dead was announced and confirmed.

V. 19. *For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be*

*made righteous.** These expressions must either be viewed as hebraisms, and then the sense will be, that as by one man's disobedience many were subjected to the sentence of death, so by the obedience of one many shall be reinstated in life: and it is as the reward of his obedience that Christ is honored with the power of raising the dead. Or the meaning must be, that as the disobedience of one man, through their imitation of him, made many sinners, so the obedience of one, by its influence on their hearts and lives, shall make many righteous.

Rom. viii. 32. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things*, i. e. He that did not keep back his own Son, but gave him, as a teacher and savior, for the benefit of us all, &c. The phrase 'delivered up' must refer to God's giving his Son to men, otherwise the agreement of the former with the latter part of the sentence will be destroyed; for the words 'how shall he not with him also freely give us all things,' evidently imply that in the former part he speaks of Christ's being given to us. The words 'delivered up,' denotes the entierity of the gift, that God gave him to us without reserve.

* Mr. LOCKE'S paraphrase of this verse is 'For as by one man's disobedience many were brought into a state of mortality, which is the state of sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous, i. e. be restored to life again, as if they were not sinners.'

Who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died. This passage simply imports that there is no condemnation to those who believe and obey the gospel, seeing Christ, by his death, hath confirmed the truth and grace of God to them.

1 Cor. v. 7. *Even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us* * This passage is evidently figurative; for Christ was not literally sacrificed, and disposed of, after the manner of the paschal lamb. The design is that those who obeyed the doctrine of Christ, which he had sealed with his blood, as the Israelites in Egypt obeyed God's institution of the passover, should be safe; this appears from the reasoning of the Apostle in connexion with the above expression.

1 Cor. vi. 20. *Ye are bought with a price.* In this passage God is considered as the purchaser; for it is added, *therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.* If God, instead of buying, had given them up to Christ for a certain price, so far from its following that they were God's, and ought to be devoted to him, in consequence of their being bought, it would follow that he had given up his claim, by selling them to another. It appears from the preceding verse that the price, which the Apostle referred to, consisted of the gifts and endowments of the holy spirit. The sense is, ye are acquired as a peculiar people, by those spiritual gifts and endowments which God hath bestowed upon you: therefore ye ought to be wholly devoted to him.

* 'The *Paschal* Lamb in *Egypt* was not to *atone* or *expiate* sins, nor was it a piacular Sacrifice.' DR. SYKES.

1 Cor. xv. 3. *Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures,* i. e. Our wickedness occasioned his death, and he died with a view to our salvation. Unless it can be proved that the scriptures of the Old Testament, to which, it is probable, Paul referred, teach that Christ was to die to make satisfaction for sins, his dying for them according to the scriptures, can be no argument in favor of that notion.

2 Cor. v. 14, 15. *For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.* Nothing is here said of Christ's dying to satisfy divine justice, or atone the wrath of God; but the design of his death is stated to be to produce a great moral effect upon men: that they should not henceforth live to themselves, in the gatification of their evil passions and desires, but to him, in obedience to his gospel, and in the imitation of his example, especially of that generous love which he manifested in laying down his life for the good of men.

V. 18, 19. *And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.* It is a little extraordinary that our opponents should refer to this passage which strikes at the root of their hypothesis. The whole plan of reconciliation is here

said to originate with God, and to be carried into effect by him, through the instrumentality of Christ. So far from the least hint being given of Christ's reconciling God to man, he is only represented as the instrument by which God reconciles the world to himself. So far from the death of Christ being considered as that alone by which reconciliation is made, the gospel, called the word of reconciliation, is represented as the grand mean by which it is effected. The silence of the Apostle respecting every thing which relates to the notion of satisfaction for sins, his suggesting what is incompatible with it, and his making the work of reconciliation to consist in a change to be effected in the creature, is a conclusive argument against that notion.

V. 21. *He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* What is meant by Christ's being made sin will be more fully considered in the next chapter; suffice it to observe at present, that the Apostle does not say that God made him to be sin for us that he might satisfy justice on our behalf, but that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The meaning seems to be that God called him to endure all his sufferings, that sinners, through believing his gospel, and being conformed to his example, might be made truly righteous persons.

Gal. i. 4. *Who gave himself for our sins.* The Apostle explains what he means, by the words immediately following, *That he might deliver us from this present evil world;* not that he might shelter us from

the wrath of God. Hence it appears that when we read of Christ's dying for our sins, it means that he submitted to death that he might free us, by his gospel, from the corrupt maxims, evil habits, and sinful practices of the world, or age, in which we live.

Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14. *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his (God's) grace.* Redemption means actual deliverance, it proceeds from the riches of the divine favor, consequently is not bought and paid for. Christ hath brought it to us in the gospel, he sacrificed his life in making it known, he confirmed the gospel, by which we are made partakers of it, by his death, and as the reward of his obedience to death he hath received authority to minister redemption to all the world; hence, with the utmost propriety, it is said we have redemption through his blood.

Eph. v. 2. *Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor.* A vicarious sacrifice cannot be intended in this place, because christians are called to imitate Christ in the things mentioned, and our opponents will not contend that they are called to offer themselves as vicarious sacrifices. The language is figurative, the meaning is, that Christ devoted himself to the will of God and the good of men, throughout the whole of his life, and by patiently enduring a most painful death, in order to make known the truth and grace

of God, which is compared to diffusing a sweet smelling savor.

Col. i. 20. *Having made peace through the blood of his cross.* This is explained, Eph. ii. 14, 15. *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.* The meaning is plain, it relates not to the making peace between God and man, but between Jew and Gentile, by putting an end to the dispensation which separated them from each other, and by uniting both in one body under the dispensation of the gospel, that God might reconcile, or bring nigh, the whole world to himself.

V. 21, 22. *And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight.* i. e. And you Gentiles who formerly were at a distance, and were opposed to the true God by your wicked idolatries, Christ hath notwithstanding now made nigh, by placing you under the dispensation of the gospel, which he sacrificed his life to introduce, and ratified with his blood, that he might make you a holy people, such as he can view with entire approbation.

1 Thess. v. 9, 10. *God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation, by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us; that whether we wake or*

sleep, we should live together with him. God hath raised up Jesus to be a savior, by him salvation is revealed in the gospel: he is exalted to be a Prince and a savior, and is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by him: hence it is evidently by him, by his teaching, and ministration, that we obtain the enjoyment of salvation. The text says nothing of Christ's having died to satisfy justice on our behalf, or to work out a robe of righteousness to cover us; but that we might live together with him: i. e. that he might lead us to a life of virtue and benevolence, and assure us of an immortal existence.

Tit. ii. 14. *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.* This passage shows that Christ gave himself to deliver us from all sin; an object much more important than that which the common notion of atonement embraces: if we be made pure and holy we are sure to enjoy God, and be perfectly happy, but the imaginary satisfaction of Christ for the sins of men leaves multitudes of them impure and miserable.

Heb. ii. 9. *That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.* That Christ in patiently submitting to death, to confirm the grace of God to men, had a view to the universal good of mankind, cannot be doubted, at least it is not doubted by any person on our side: and this is all that can be justly inferred from the above passage.

Heb. vii. 27. *Who needed not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when*

he offered up himself. The reason assigned for this, in the next verse, is, that the law maketh men high-priests which have infirmity; but that Christ is consecrated for evermore: consequently, that his once dying was a sufficient confirmation of the gospel, and dedication of himself to his office and work; that the gospel thus confirmed remains sufficient to remove sin and all its painful effects from the mind; that Christ being once consecrated no further sacrifice could be needed to establish him in his office, or give efficacy to his ministrations.

Heb. ix. 12. *Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.* This passage is highly figurative, and alludes to the jewish High Priest entering into the inner tabernacle under the law, to sprinkle the blood of the sacrificed victim; but this was not literally true of Christ; he did not carry his blood in his hand, into heaven, to sprinkle it there. The most that can be collected from the words is, that it was through obedience to death he attained his high dignity, and the ministration of all the blessings of the gospel. His obtaining eternal redemption (the words *for us* are inserted by the translators) must either mean, that he obtained eternal deliverance from death, as it is said, *he dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him,* (Rom. vi. 9.) or that he hath received authority to minister eternal salvation to all who obey him, chap. v. 9.

V. 15. *And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first Testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.* The cause for which Christ is the mediator of the New Testament is, as stated in the preceding verse, that he might purge the consciences of men from dead works to serve the living God. From the following verses it appears that he died to confirm the Testament, i. e. the gospel, by which those who believe are redeemed, or delivered, from the transgressions which continued while the first Testament, or the law, remained in force, *that* not having sufficient energy to deliver from them. Hence the meaning of the above passage seems to be, that Christ is the mediator of the gospel, that by means of its confirmation by his death, for the deliverance of men from those evils from which the law of Moses could not deliver them, those who are called might have all its blessings secured to them. This sense of the words is established by the context.

V. 26. *Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.* To put away sin, is to remove it from the creature, not to do something which leaves him still under it and its effects. Christ sacrificed his life to make mankind pure and holy.

V. 28. *Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.* To bear sins, we have already shown, ac-

cording to the jewish style, means to bear away, or remove them. The Epistle to the Hebrews, written to Jews, abounds with jewish phraseology, and no doubt it is to be understood in a jewish sense: consequently to bear sins includes neither the imputation of guilt, nor the infliction of punishment. In devoting himself to God, in his sufferings, Christ had in view the salvation of the world, the removal of sin from mankind; hence he is said to be offered to bear the sins of many.

Chap. x. 12. *This man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.* The context shows that his offering a sacrifice for sins intends his confirming to men all the blessings of salvation made known by the gospel, (see v. 14—23.) In all his sufferings he had a view to the deliverance of mankind from all their sins; hence he is said to sacrifice himself for sins.

1 Pet. i. 18, 19. *Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.* In quoting this passage our opponents omit the latter part of the 18. v. if they included *that* it would at once appear that the text is not at all to their purpose. The Apostle is not speaking of their being redeemed from God, or from the hand of his justice; his words are, *ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers.* The sense is, ye were not delivered from your former state of ignorance and sin at the expence of earthly

treasure; but through the sufferings which Christ endured in bringing the gospel to you, and for its confirmation. This view of the passage is established by what is said, v. 21. of the end of the sufferings, resurrection, and exaltation of Christ, *that your faith and hope might be in God.*

Chap. ii. 24. *Who his ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin might live to righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed.* V. 20. The Apostle reminds christians that if when they do well, and suffer for it, they take it patiently, this is acceptable with God: and adds (v. 21.) that hereunto they were called; *because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.* Hence it appears that he is speaking of Christ's patiently bearing all the wicked treatment of men, in the sufferings they unjustly inflicted on him. As if he had said, Christ himself patiently endured all the sinful dispositions and actions of men towards him, when they tortured his body by nailing him to the cross; therefore ye ought patiently to endure the sinful treatment ye receive at the hands of men. This exposition is supported by the context. At any rate as christians are commanded to imitate what Christ hath done in bearing the sins of men, it cannot imply any thing vicarious. He does not say Christ bare our sins that he might atone the wrath of God, or satisfy his justice; but that we might die to sin and live unto righteousness, i. e. that he might purify and make us holy by his ex-

ample. His stripes heal us as our moral defects are cured by his teaching and example.

Chap. iii. 18. *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* This is given as a reason why christians should suffer for well doing, on account of the sins of others. When it is said, *For Christ also,* it implies that his sufferings were of the same nature, and arose from the same cause, however much greater in degree, as those which christians are commanded patiently to endure. The argument of the Apostle is, that it is better for christians, if the will of God be so, to suffer for well doing, on account of the sins of men, their unjust treatment, than otherwise; for Christ also hath done the same, though he was just yet through the injustice of men he was made to endure the most bitter sufferings, and he bare it all patiently that he might bring us to God; (not that he might deliver us from his vengeful hand) therefore we ought to imitate him in this that we may promote the salvation of our fellow creatures.

2 Pet. ii. 1. *Denying the Lord that bought them.* The word *bought* in this passage is figurative. The Apostle simply meant, that the persons he had in view, by their ungodly practices, denied the Lord who had *acquired them,* by placing them under the dispensation of the gospel, to be a peculiar people to himself, zealous of good works.

1 John, i. 7. *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.* It must be admitted on all hands that these words are figurative; for no man

ever was literally cleansed by the blood of Christ. It is an undeniable fact that it is by the gospel men are purified in heart and life. The blood of Christ is said to do what the gospel effects, because his death was the grand confirmation of the gospel. These remarks equally apply to Rev. i. 5.

Chap. ii. 12. *Your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake,* For any thing that appears in the context, the name of the Father, may be here intended. Granting, for argument sake that it is the name of Christ, it will follow that the words can mean no more than that they had forgiveness of sins on the ground of the authority of Christ, or through him, i. e. by the gospel.*

Rev. v. 9. *Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.* This passage speaks of being redeemed *to* God, not delivered from his revenging sword: to be in favor of the popular doctrine of atonement, such passages should read, redeemed *from* God. It is evident the redemption spoken of means actual deliverance from ignorance and sin; and it is said to be effected by the blood of Christ, because he submitted to the death of the cross, in order to accomplish the salvation of sinners by the gospel.

Such are the passages quoted by our opponents;† a

* 'Διὰ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, through his name, i. e. through him.'

DR. SYKES.

† They are the passages quoted by *Mr. Jerram;* and by the bare quotation of them he attempts to support the popular notion of atonement. As Mr. J. is the latest writer on the subject, and is acquaint-

bare exhibition of them will discover, to the candid and serious enquirer after truth, how destitute their hypothesis is of plain and positive proofs, I have not knowingly omitted any passage on which they rely in support of their doctrine, unless it be considered in other parts of this work. On the whole the reader may observe that the advocates for the notion of satisfaction, build their hypothesis upon detached passages of scripture, without duly regarding the context, and upon the literal construction of figurative language.

ed with what writers of celebrity have urged in its defence, I conclude that he has quoted such texts as they think most to their purpose.

CHAPTER SIXTH.

Remarks on several offices of Christ, &c.

SEVERAL of the offices ascribed to Christ ve been supposed to favor the hypothesis of our ponents; but it is presumed that on due examina- n the contrary will appear.

1. *Of Christ as a Mediator,*

t is conceived that the nature of the mediation of rist has been greatly mistaken, by those who have resented it as consisting in his interposing to rescue n from the revenging hand of God, or from the oke of his justice, by enduring the divine wrath his own person, and making satisfaction for sins; as God is love, as his rich mercy flows from his at love, and all the blessings of salvation flow m his favor, it is presumed such interposition ne- could be necessary. To suppose that no favor is be obtained from God, without Christ's inter- on our behalf to procure it for us, is degrading the infinite benevolence of the Deity, and exalting goodness of his Son and Servant above that of the ntiful Father of all.

The word mediator is applied to Christ in the following passages. 1 Tim. ii. 5. *One mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* Heb. viii. 6. *He is the mediator of a better covenant.* Chap. ix. 15. *He is the mediator of the New Testament.* Chap. xii. 24. *Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.* It is presumed that the sense of these passages is, that he is the medium of all the blessings of grace and salvation to men, as by him God hath revealed and communicated the gospel with all its benefits. So Moses is called a mediator. Gal. iii. 19. because by him God communicated his law to Israel.

The 'word' says an excellent writer 'occurs four times in the Epistles of the Apostle Paul, applied to the office and ministry of Jesus Christ; in three of which he is stiled 'the mediator of a better or new covenant;' referring to the promise of divine mercy and favor which he published and which he confirmed by his death.—In each of these passages there is an implied contrast between his office and that of Moses, who is called a mediator; (Gal. iii. 19.) because he stood between the LORD and the people of Israel at the giving of the law, and showed it unto them; (Deut. v. 5.) or by his hand it was communicated. (Lev. xxvi. 46.) The word, if we regard the original derivation of it, either in Greek or Latin,* signifies a person in the middle between two parties. Christ was God's minister between him and sinful man, delivering the gospel, or the word of reconci-

* 'μισος, and medius.'

liation, to mankind, as Moses delivered the law to the Jews. He was the mean, or medium of communication between God, and not one nation only, but the whole human race. The word imports the general truth, which the Apostle expresseth in another place, that God in Christ, or by and through Christ, reconciled the world to himself. (2 Cor. v. 19.) The great leading acts of Christ's office, as mediator, were his preaching and his death: the declarations made in the name of God by the former, and the attestations given to these declarations by the latter. He instructed mankind, and he evinced, by the most unequivocal proofs, the divine authority of his instructions.'

'The ministry of reconciliation, which he faithfully executed, was closed by a most painful and ignominious death. It is with reference to this termination of his ministry by a voluntary death, that the Apostle calls him a mediator. (Heb. ix. 15—18.) Covenants were confirmed amongst the ancients by sacrifices. The covenant made with the Jews, of which Moses was the mediator, was confirmed by the sprinkling of the blood of oxen, as burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. When Christ had delivered the assurances of divine mercy, and the promise of eternal life he himself became the victim to ratify those declarations. His death gave force to his doctrine and evinced his veracity. It was the natural consequence of the umbrage, which his popularity, zeal, and doctrine gave to the great men of the jew-

ish nation. But, though it happened in the usual course of things, yet in obedience to the command which he had received from his Father, he willingly submitted to it, rather than deny the truth he had delivered: or relinquish the claims he had advanced, it was his last testimony to the doctrine of reconciliation, of which he was the mediator.' [DR. TOULMIN's *Sermon on the Unity of God, and the character of Jesus Christ.* P. 16 & 19.]

If Christ be the medium of the divine will and favor, of salvation and eternal life to us, we have through his mediation all we want, without associating with it the absurd notion of his atoning the wrath of God.

2. Of Christ as a surety.

It is very common for reputed orthodox christians to call Christ the surety of sinners, and to talk of his becoming surety to God for them; but never in the scriptures is he called the surety of sinners, or said to be a surety to God for us. Once only is he called a surety, (Heb. vii. 22.) and then it is of the Testament, or covenant. He is so called because the New covenant was lodged in his hands, and he confirmed it by his death. His suretiship has no relation to his becoming responsible for the sins of men, but to his fully attesting the truth of the gospel, and to his giving us the strongest assurance that all its promises shall be accomplished. The former would destroy

our personal responsibility; the latter fills us with faith and hope, and stimulates to obedience.

3. *Of Christ as a propitiation.*

This word is once applied to Christ in the Epistles of Paul, and twice in the first Epistle of John. Rom. iii. 25. *whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation.* The Greek word ἱλαστήριον rendered propitiation, in this place, ought to have been rendered mercy-seat. The Apostle alludes to the jewish mercy-seat, and applies the same term to Christ because the mercy of God is revealed to us by, and communicated through him. The LXX. generally use the same word for the mercy-seat. It is translated *mercy-seat*, Heb. ix. 5. Tindal's translation reads, *whom God hath made a seat of mercy.* Leigh would render the word *propitiatory*, and says *God hath made Christ the mercy-seat.* Hammond would render it *propitiatory*, i. e. *mercy-seat.* Whitby, a propitiatory, or a mercy-seat.' Wakefield, instead of propitiation, reads *mercy-seat.* BISHOP BEVERIDGE says, '*God hath set forth him to be* ἱλαστήριον, that is, not a *propitiation*, as we render it, but *the mercy-seat*, as the word signifies, Rom. iii. 25.' [Sermons. Vol. x. P. 179.] Thus it is evident, even from English versions, that Christ's being called a propitiation has nothing to do with the doctrine of satisfaction, that it means no more than that he is the seat, or the medium of Jehovah's mercy to mankind.

1 John, ii. 2. *He is the propitiation for our sins.* Chap. iv. 10. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.* Though it is not the same word here as is rendered propitiation in the passage already noticed, it must be understood the same, ἱλασμὸς, rendered propitiation in these passages, is derived from a root which signifies mercy, or pity. It must either mean that which makes another merciful or propitious, or that which shows him to be so. Our opponents, in the present day, will not say that the death of Christ made God merciful, as that would imply that he was not always merciful, consequently, when he is called a propitiation the meaning must be that he is the medium of the divine mercy to sinners. His being sent to be a propitiation is said be the effect of the previous love of God to mankind, consequently, nothing done by him could be necessary to render God loving and merciful to them: it follows that the above passages can only mean that the divine mercy is revealed, and communicated to us through Christ. It is not his death that is mentioned when he is called a propitiation, but what he is to us; the design is to show that the mercy of God is brought to us by the gospel. Thus it appears that Christ's being a propitiation has nothing to do with the popular doctrine of atonement, it only relates to God's having shown himself loving, merciful, and forgiving to sinners by his Son in the gospel: and if we be made partakers of his mercy, enjoy the free *forgiveness* of sins, and receive the hope of eternal

life, we need give ourselves no concern about the appeasement of his wrath.

4. *Of Christ as an advocate.*

In one place in the New Testament Christ is called an advocate. 1 John, ii. 1. *We have an advocate with the Father.* By an arbitrary exposition of the word advocate an argument has been constructed in favor of the doctrine of satisfaction. It has been contended that as an advocate he pleads on the ground of right, that, consequently, he must have fully satisfied for our sins, or he could not so plead. But such reasoning involves suppositions highly dishonorable to the divine character: it supposes him capable of being wrought upon and moved by argument; that Christ is like a counsellor pleading at the bar, though the Apostles spake of him as an exalted governor; and that though he hath made good his part of the contract or covenant, of which so much has been said, he finds it necessary to be constantly pleading with the Father to bring him to fulfil his part of it. Surely the word must have a different meaning as applied to Christ. Is it not acting the part of an advocate to espouse the cause, and promote the interest of another? Under this view he may be called our advocate. But it is certain God is not so unkind, or unfaithful, as to render an advocate necessary to vindicate our cause before him, to bind him to the fulfilment of his promises, and the gracious declarations of his gospel: nor could ten thousand advocates, conti-

nually pleading before him, induce him to deviate from the righteousness of his ways, or view with approbation those who act wrong. It follows that the common notion of the advocateship of Christ is absurd, and what it ascribes to him totally useless.

The Greek word παρακλητος, rendered advocate in the above passage occurs no where else, in the New Testament, but in the gospel of John. It is but once applied to Christ, and three times to the holy spirit. When applied to the spirit it is uniformly translated *comforter:* this shows that the translators did not think it must necessarily mean an advocate. It may be rendered *a patron, consolator,* and according to *Campbell,* a *monitor, instructor, guide,* as properly as *an advocate.* Perhaps *consolator* would be the most proper rendering when it is applied to Christ, as it would agree best with the context.

Of Christ as an Intercessor.

The ideas commonly entertained of the intercession of Christ are inconsistent with the character of God, with the present exalted state of Jesus, and with his express declarations and those of his Apostles. It has been supposed to mean that he is ever praying to the Father for us, reminding him of what he suffered on our behalf, and intreating him to be favorable to us. This implies that the Father is reluctant to bestow favors, and that he must be continually urged and stimulated, or he will neither show mercy, nor fulfil his promises; contrary to what is declared, that he waiteth to be gracious, (Isa. xxx.

18.) and delighteth in the exercise of mercy. (Mic. vii. 18.) It also implies that Christ appears in the posture of a suppliant before the throne, which is incompatible with the idea that he is seated on the throne, and constituted Lord of all; and supposes that he has not already received all blessings necessary to be communicated for the edification of the church; for if he has to ask for every blessing as it is communicated to us it follows that all fulness do not dwell in him, that all the blessings we need are not already brought to us in the gospel. It contradicts the plain declaration of Jesus, who said, *I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you,* (John, xvi. 26.) by supposing that he is still praying to the Father for us, and of the Apostle, who asserts, that *It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell,* (Col. i. 19.) and that when he ascended on high he gave all the gifts necessary for the edifying of the church, *till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* (Eph. iv. 13.) It also supposes that God will not hear our prayers unless the petitions of another be united with them, though Cornelius, a virtuous heathen, was informed by vision that his prayers and alms were come up for a memorial before God, (Acts, x. 4.) Hence it is evident that the popular notion of the intercession of Christ must be erroneous.

The holy spirit also is said to make intercession for the saints, Rom. viii. 26, 27. but it cannot mean that

he prays to God personally for them, it is referred by the Apostle to the assistance which christians derive from the spirit which the gospel communicated to them: and why may not the intercession of Christ refer to the direction and assistance which he affords us by his gospel to enable us to pray as we ought.

The word ἐντυγχανω, rendered intercession, as applied to Christ, seems to relate to his bringing us nigh to God, by confirming and perpetuating to us all the blessings of the gospel. *Wakefield* understood it to relate to his managing the concerns of christians for them.

If the intercession of Christ be taken literally it cannot be reconciled with the notion of satisfaction; for if he literally purchased all blessings, there can be no need for him to be continually praying to God to let him have what he bought and paid for: the Father certainly would not defraud him of his bargain.

6. *Of Christ's being made sin for us.*

2 Cor. v. 21. *He hath made him to be sin for us.* This passage cannot be understood literally, for Christ always remained pure and holy. That the words are an Hebraism, I think, must be admitted: consequently, they may be understood to mean that God permitted his Son to be treated as a sinner by wicked men, who put him to death as a malefactor; and because, in the jewish idiom, God is said to do what he permits to be done, though the doing of it be contrary to his divine command, therefore Christ's *being* made sin in this sense, is ascribed to him. It

is fully granted that God's permitting his righteous servant, Jesus, to be treated as a sinner was intended to effect our recovery from guilt, pollution, and misery; *that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*, i. e. through the influence of his teaching and example be made truly righteous characters. If this view of the passage be rejected, it must be understood to mean that he was made a *sin-offering*, and in this light several learned expositors have construed it. The most our opponents can make of it, in favor of their hypothesis, is to prove that Christ was made a sin-offering; and in adopting that explanation they, in fact, only substitute one figurative expression in the place of another; for he was not literally made a sin-offering, according to the mosaic law. That he fell a victim on account of sin, sacrificed his life to put it away, is fully granted; but that divine justice called for such a sacrifice to satisfy its demands on the sinner, that the penalties incurred by sinners are cancelled by his death, that the law of God was honored by the murder of his beloved Son, and that the most atrocious of murders was absolutely necessary to render it a just thing for the *Father of mercies* to forgive his guilty creatures, are points which we call upon our opponents to prove; and till they be proved it will not appear that the sacrifice of Christ was vicarious.

Under the law, did God impute the sins of the people to the beast which was made *a sin-offering*? or did he transfer his wrath from them to it? was the

sin-offering intended to show forth the wrath and displeasure of God against sinners? All this has been taken for granted, but without any shadow of proof. 'It is obvious, that to impute sin to any one who has never committed it, is to make him a sinner, who was not so of himself: and will any one affirm that God, by an act of his own, makes sinners of those whom he does not find so?' To suppose that God imputed sin to the animals which were sacrificed under the law would involve another absurdity; it would not only imply that God made sinners of those creatures that never sinned, but that he made sinners of those who were incapable of either sinning, or knowing what sin is. The sacred writers have no where told us, that God was wroth with the beasts because men had transgressed, and that he could show sinners no favor until he had poured out his wrath upon dumb animals, and satiated his vengeance with their blood. So far from sacrifices being intended to display the wrath of God, they were a benevolent provision, intended to display his mercy, and show his readiness to pardon the penitent, and receive the obedient to favor. Consequently could it be proved that Christ was as literally a sin offering as any one of the jewish sacrifices, this would prove nothing in favor of the notion of satisfaction for sins.

7. Of Christ's being made a curse for us.

Gal. iii. 13. *Christ hath redeemed us from the*

curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. That Christ was made a curse is a fact not to be disputed, but whether he was made so justly or unjustly, by his holy Father or by wicked men, is the point in question. We have no authority to say that God cursed his well beloved Son, who always did those things which pleased him: we are several times informed that the Father expressed his entire approbation of him; but we have not the least intimation that he ever denounced him as an accursed person, or that *he* made him a curse. The law could not curse him for it cursed none but transgressors; it would have been a violation both of its letter and spirit to curse the innocent for the crimes of the guilty. We are no where told in the sacred writings that Christ suffered justly, or that it was a righteous thing to curse him. The wicked Jews denounced him as an accursed person, they condemned him by a perversion of law and justice, and made him a curse by hanging him on a tree; but they were declared murderers for their pains. Neither God, nor the law, could curse a man who was unjustly condemned; but Christ was unjustly condemned; had God made him a curse, and his law condemned him to die, the Jews could have been no more guilty of murder, in declaring him accursed, and putting him to death, than the Judges of Israel had always been, when they condemned, and put to death transgressors. Hence it is evident Christ was made a curse by a perversion of justice, not by God, but by wicked men.

"It may be questioned whether the passage which the Apostle quotes from the law means any thing more than that the person who was hanged on a tree was condemned of the Judges; to curse means to condemn, execrate, or cut off, and the Hebrew word *Alehim*, rendered God in the passage is a name sometimes applied, in the Old Testament, to the Judges and Rulers of Israel. Under this view the passage quoted was strictly applicable to Christ; for he was condemned, execrated, and cut off, by the Judges, though most unjustly. He was made a curse for us as he endured all his sufferings with a view to our benefit: and he redeemed or delivered those who were under the law from the curse of it, as through his death he fully introduced the dispensation of the gospel, by which the law, with all its curses is superseded.

8. *Of Christ's agony in the garden.*

Our Lord's agony in the garden has been sometimes insisted on as a strong proof of the wrath of God being poured out upon him: yet nothing of this sort is intimated in the account given by the Evangelists of that scene. If we could assign no reason for the anguish he felt it would by no means follow that it must have arisen from the cause to which our opponents attribute it. Much of his sorrow might arise from sympathy, especially with his own people the Jews, who he saw were bringing the greatest calamities upon themselves and their posterity. It appears, however, from the account itself, and from a refer-

ence to it, Heb. v. 7. that his distress arose from the view he had of the cruel treatment, and ignominious death which awaited him. Never was man, before or since, called to endure equally complicated sufferings, taking all circumstances into the view, in the same space of time. Never had any other sufferer such a complete view beforehand of all his sufferings. Never, perhaps, had any other man feelings so exquisite, or a soul so capable of being harrowed up to the last degree. Most irreverently have the advocates for satisfaction talked, when they have presumed to say, that, if his sufferings did not arise from the wrath of God being poured out upon him, the anguish of his mind in the garden sinks his character below many of the martyrs. They have not considered the circumstances mentioned above: nor have they taken into the account that the martyrs had his example, and resurrection, to strengthen them; but whose example had he to encourage him? He was the first that rose from the dead. He manifested no cowardice in suffering; throughout, with firmnes, he resigned himself to the will of his Father. Had his feelings of pain and sorrow been less exquisite, his piety, his virtue, his patience had been less perfect. Had he not felt so deeply, he had been less suited to be our example in bearing sufferings, and less qualified to act the part of a merciful high priest.

9. *Of Christ's exclamation on the cross, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*

If he quoted these words as a prophecy concerning

himself, they cannot fairly be construed to mean any thing more, than that God had so far withdrawn his protection as to suffer him to fall a victim to the rage and malice of cruel men. The Psalm from which they are supposed to be quoted speaks of no sufferings but from the hands of men. But, when we consider all the circumstances in which they were uttered, it may justly be questioned whether they were not the language of confidence. The phrase, *my God, my God*, is certainly language of confidence. The people and priests, surrounding him in his dying moments, mocked him as one abandoned of God, he, hearing this, addresses himself with confidence to his Father, *My God, My God, why! oh how! hast thou forsaken me?* Is it as my enemies say? and soon after he said *Into thy hands I commit my spirit.* This was a full proof that he was confident his God had not abandoned him. While his enemies were reproaching him with being abandoned of God, he would hardly utter words which would express his assent to the truth of what they said.

10. *Whether God forgives sins for the sake of Christ?*

Eph. iv. 32. *Forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* The original of this passage simply expresses that God *in* Christ hath forgiven us, and so Wakefield has justly rendered it. But if the common rendering be retained, and duly compared with other parts of scripture, it will be

found to give no support to the popular notion of atonement. Paul speaks of the Jews being beloved for the fathers' sakes; (Rom. xi. 28.) but it certainly cannot mean on account of the merit of the fathers. I should rather suppose the sense to be, on the ground of the promises made to the fathers: so on the ground of the divine promises, given us in Christ, we receive the knowledge of forgiveness of sins. Indeed as the words stand connected they are incapable of any other sense; for God is said to forgive in the manner in which christians are commanded to forgive each other: but christians are commanded to forgive each other freely, without standing upon payment, or satisfaction. Christ himself said that for the Elect's sake the days of calamity, which should come on the jewish nation, should be shortened: (Matt. xxiv. 22.) but no one will suppose he intended that on account of the merit of the elect those days should be shortened: it follows that the phrase, *for Christ's sake,* does not necessarily mean on account of his merits. It shows the weakness of a cause when its advocates found arguments in its support upon what they cannot well help knowing is a mistranslation. *H. Taylor,* (in his Ben Mordicai's Letters) says, 'There is no expression in the Greek Testament, which necessarily signifies, that our sins are forgiven us for *Christ's sake.* The words,'—— adds he 'which *Mr. Chubb* particularly fixes upon, are these, As God for *Christ's* sake hath forgiven you: but the original is, as God hath forgiven you in Christ.' *Mr. Pyle* says, 'The sense (of Eph. iv.

32.) seems plainly to be, God forgives in or through Christ: viz. by him preaching and declaring and granting forgiveness upon man's repentance.'

THE

ANTI-SATISFACTIONIST, &c.

PART THE THIRD.

CONTAINING

Chapter 1. The nature of the death of Christ.

Chap. 2. The design of his death.

Chap. 3. The connexion of the death of Christ with the dispensation of the gospel.

Chap. 4. The connexion of the death of Christ with the Salvation of men.

THE

ANTI-SATISFACTIONIST, &c.

PART THE THIRD.

CHAPTER FIRST.

The nature of the death of Christ.

THE death of Christ is a fact too plainly stated in the New Testament for any serious christian to doubt its reality; but upon two points relative to it the professors of the gospel are much divided, i. e. in their opinions of his person, and of what occasioned his death. These points we will examine.

One fact is certain, i. e. that whatever the person of Christ may be, his real and proper person died. It is not the death of a part of him, what was not essential to his existence, that the gospel declares, but the death of a whole Christ. He whom the Jews nailed to the cross was the very Christ. *Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.* (Acts, ii. 36.) such was the language of the Apostles to the Jews. If a real and complete Christ did not

die, a real and complete Christ could not rise; but that which was raised from the dead, be it whatever it might, was declared to be the Son of God with power Rom. i 4. There is no Christ preached in the gospel but he who was crucified. He who was raised from the dead, consequently who actually died, is the appointed judge of quick and dead, Acts, xvii. 31. Hence it is clear, that Christ, in his proper person, could, and did, actually die.

Many of the advocates for the modern doctrine of atonement have contended that none but an infinite and eternal being could make satisfaction for sins; yet that the satisfaction was made by the death of the person who made it. The late *Mr. J. Hervey* says, 'Had our Savior's sufferings been the sufferings of a mere man, or of the most exalted Angel, I acknowledge they could have borne no proportion to our demerit. It were impossible for a finite being to sustain the wrath, or discharge the debt.—Was an infinite *Majesty* offended? an infinite *Mediator* atoned. Weigh the dignity, the immense dignity of the *Redeemer's* person against the everlasting duration of our punishment and it will not only *counter-balance* but *preponderate*. Finite creatures can never make an infinite satisfaction, no not through the most unlimited revolution of ages. Whereas when our *divine Lord* undertook the work, being truly and properly infinite, He finished it at once.' Thus, it seems, the good man thought, that nothing but the death of a divine, infinite person, a person of immense dignity, could make satisfaction; but the death of such a

person is an impossibility; consequently, on this ground, satisfaction for sins is an impossibility. Had Christ been such a person he must have been immortal, incorruptible, impassible, his death would have been an absolute impossibility. There can be but one divine, infinite, person, possessed of immense dignity, in the universe: even the self-existent God. To suppose him capable of dying, to talk of his being crucified and slain, of his enduring wrath and punishment, would be in the highest degree absurd, not to say blasphemous. Yet if such absurdity be not true the notion of satisfaction is a mere nullity, even according to the reasoning of many of its supporters. I am aware that others of them hold different language, and there is a manifest clashing among them. *Mr. Robinson*, of Leicester, in his scripture characters, says, 'In his humanity *alone* he was capable of obeying and suffering for us, in this alone he could sustain the character of a merciful and faithful high priest, and be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.' 'The *same nature* which sinned atoned for the transgression and repaired the breach.' According to this good man, the death of Christ was merely the death of a man, his sufferings human sufferings: but this involves an inference which would be fatal to other parts of his system; i. e. that Christ was simply a man, anointed with the holy spirit and with power; for that which suffered and died was the Christ, the Son of the living God.

That the death of Christ was strictly the death of a man his Apostles plainly testified; *since by man came*

death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 1 Cor. xv. 21. It is also plain from the relation given of his sufferings. He evidently felt as a man: was capable of being affected with shame and reproach, with scorn and reviling as we are: he was susceptible of corporeal pain, and anguish of mind, of all the emotions of human nature in a state of suffering. He bled, was exhausted with weariness and torture, yielded up his breath, was laid in the grave: every circumstance attendant on his death prove his proper humanity.

Though his death was properly that of a man, it was that of the most extraordinary man that ever lived. God anointed him with his holy spirit and with power, hence he is called *the Christ.* He had a divine mission superior to what had ever before been communicated. He possessed the most splendid miraculous powers. He was the most perfect image of God, in his teaching, spirit and conduct, of any person that ever appeared among men, hence he is called the Son of God, his only-begotten, or best-beloved Son. He was destined to the highest dignity, honor and glory, ever to be conferred on a human being. He came to reveal life, and life more abundantly to men; hence he is called the Prince of life. He derived all his authority, his doctrine, and extraordinary powers from God, and came to begin a new creation, in a moral sense; hence he is called the second man, the Lord from heaven. His conduct was most pure, he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and seperate from sinners. His life was a continued series

of benevolent actions, he went about doing good. The sufferings of so distinguished a person, of such superior dignity of character, of such unequalled virtue and benevolence, must interest every virtuous and feeling mind, and be calculated to answer very important purposes. The sufferings of distinguished personages excite particular attention and respect; but never have we heard of so distinguished a personage as Jesus of Nazareth: if they suffer wrongfully, and be treated with great cruelty, this increases the interest we feel in their sufferings; but never were sufferings more entirely unprovoked, and unmerited than his: if they are persons eminently distinguished by superior virtue and usefulness, the feelings are raised to a high degree of veneration while we contemplate their sufferings; but the virtue and usefulness of Christ have never been equalled. The manner in which he died too, his calmness, patience, magnanimity, resignation to the will of God, and kindness to his murderers, all add interest to the scene. Thus it appears that the death of Christ is a subject of peculiar interest, and ought to excite much attention, and be examined with feelings of respect and admiration.

The Lord Jesus Christ died a violent death: he was cut off in the prime of life, in the flower of his days, not by any decay of nature, not by the operation of disease, not by any unforeseen incident, but by the wicked machinations of cruel men. What was done to him by men was sufficient to produce his death, without including any other circumstance

Their hurrying him from place to place, his loss of rest, his being buffeted, scourged, crowned with thorns, and handled in the most rude and unfeeling manner, were circumstances calculated to exhaust nature, especially when added to his precious watching and mental conflict. This may account for his being so soon dead after he was crucified. His crucifixion must have terminated his life had they simply nailed him to the cross and left him there. And simply the wound which he received with a spear, which it seems pierced him to the heart, must have ended his life, had he not been already dead. It follows that we need seek for no other cause of his death but the cruel and murderous treatment he received at the hands of men.

When our Lord foretold his death it was always as the effect of what would be done to him by sinners: that he must suffer many things of the Jews, be betrayed into their hands, and crucified. The Apostles always charged his death upon the jewish rulers and people, and whenever they referred to the cause of it they mentioned nothing but what was done to him by men. Hence it is evident that both he and the Apostles considered his death as arising solely from the violence of his enemies. They gave no intimation that it was occasioned by the hand of his Father being stretched forth against him, by *his* plunging his sword in his soul, or by his pouring out his wrath upon him.

In the New Testament the putting Christ to death *is represented* as a wicked deed, an atrocious mur-

der, planned by ignorance, prejudice, bigotry, disappointed pride, and executed by treachery, malice, perjury and injustice; nor is the least hint given that it was what justice required should be done.

I am aware that from one passage of scripture it has been inferred, that the Jews were only instruments in the hand of God by whom he executed his Son; but such an inference involves the most absurd, not to say blasphemous, suppositions respecting the divine character, i. e. that he had determined on the murder of an innocent person, but when it was to be perpetrated he kept out of sight, and employed others to do it, that afterwards he laid the whole blame upon them and severely punished them for their conduct. This is to suppose the Almighty to be like David, when he plotted the murder of Uriah, but contrived to have it effected through the agency of Joab, by the sword of the children of Ammon. The passage referred to is, Acts, iv. 27, 28. *For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus whom thou has anointed, (both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together) for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.* Part of this passage should be read as a parenthesis, and then, as *Dr. Du Veil* well observes, 'This whole eight and twentieth verse may be aptly joined with the words of the last preceding, *whom thou has anointed,* in this manner. *For Pontius Pilate, and Herod have really gathered*

*together with the Gentiles, and people of Israel in this city, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed to do what thy hand and counsel decreed to be done.**

The death of Christ was voluntary. It was by his voluntary obedience to his Father, in bearing testimony to the truth, in opposition to the prejudices of the Jews, that he subjected himself to their resentment, which occasioned their slaying him. He might have kept at a distance from Jerusalem, or have availed himself of his popularity with the multitude to have resisted their attempts on his life, to say nothing of his miraculous powers; but he never shunned danger when duty called him to face it, nor made the least resistance when treated with the greatest injustice and barbarity; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him who judgeth righteously. He said, *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scripture be fulfilled?* (Matt. xxvi. 53, 54.) This fully proves that his obedience to death was voluntary: and that God would not have exacted it had it been otherwise. Because he suffered voluntarily, in obedience to the will of his Father, he said, *Therefore doth the Father love me because I lay down my life that I might take (receive) it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power (authority) to lay it down, and I*

* Dr. DU VEIL'S *Literal Explanation of the Acts.*

have power (authority) to take (to receive) it again. This commandment (to suffer without resistance, and expect the restoration of my life) *received I of my Father.* (John, x. 17, 18.) Thus it appears, that he valued truth more than his life; that he chose the most dreadful sufferings rather than disobey his Father, that he preferred the good of mankind to, not only his own reputation and ease, but even to life itself.

CHAPTER SECOND.

The design of the death of Christ.

GOD hath some wise end in view in every thing which he suffers to take place, it was doubtless to answer some grand and glorious purpose that he suffered his Son Jesus to fall into the hands of wicked men, and to be crucified by them: what this purpose was is the object of our present enquiry.

It was not to effect any change in God, neither in his nature, character, any of his perfections, nor in his designs, that Christ submitted to death; for God is, under every view, an unchangeable being. It was not to excite him to love his creatures, for he had always loved them; nor to render him merciful, for he had always been merciful: nor to render it fit and proper for him to show mercy, and exercise forgiveness, for he had shown mercy and exercised forgiveness long before. It was no doubt to produce an important effect somewhere; but the effect to be produced must be entirely among creatures, relate wholly to them, and be in and upon them only.

The design of the death of Christ may be briefly comprehended in this one point to confirm the truth of God; and all the effects produced by it result from *that* confirmation. Grace *and truth came by Jesus*

Christ, he is *the faithful and true witness.* In the good confession which he witnessed before Pontius Pilate he testified, *To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness to the truth.* His death was the last act of his life, he died for the same purpose as he lived; it was the finishing of his testimony; he was a martyr, and the king of martyrs; by his death he bore the strongest testimony, and gave the highest confirmation, to the truth of God: on due consideration this will appear of the greatest importance to mankind.

It is objected by our opponents that if Christ merely died to confirm the truth, he hath done no more for us than the martyrs who sealed the truth with their blood. To this I reply that we associate other important objects with his death which cannot be associated, in the same sense with the death of the martyrs. Had not he revealed and confirmed the truth of the gospel there could have been no martyrs in its cause; consequently, what the martyrs sealed with their blood, and the act of their doing it, had a dependance on his first revealing and confirming it. Besides, though the martyrs might seal the truth with their blood, they have none of them risen from the dead as Jesus did, at once to complete the ratification, and illustrate the nature of what they died to defend: and the death of Christ is not to be separated from his resurrection, when considered as the highest confirmation of the truth.

His death was a confirmation of the truth of God under various views. As it had been foretold by the

Prophets, it was a confirmation of the general truth of the prophecies in the Old Testament, and of the certainty of their fulfilment. It ratified the ancient promises; for *he was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers.* (Rom. xv. 8.) It seems then that to establish the truth of God, and confirm his promises, was the great end of his ministry, which he closed by his death. The promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, i. e. affirmed, and confirmed. The truth of his character as the Messiah, of his divine mission, and of his doctrine, were confirmed by his death: in particular the doctrine of immortality, which he brought to light, was both ratified and illustrated by his dying and rising; for if he had not died he could not have risen from the dead, and this most important subject would have been without its strongest evidence, and plainest illustration. As it is the truth of God which enlightens, saves, purifies and makes us happy, and is the ground of our immortal hopes, it must be an end worthy of God to give it the highest confirmation by the death of his Son. This stamps the highest value and importance on the voluntary surrender which Christ made of his life for our benefit.

As he died to ratify the truth of God, he hereby confirmed the divine love, mercy and grace to men; he confirmed the promises made to the fathers, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. (Rom. xv. 9.) The Apostles never intimated that his death was intended to manifest the wrath of God,

show forth his displeasure against sin; but they plainly asserted that it was intended to manifest the love of God, and show his favor to men. *God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Herein perceive we the love of God because Christ laid down his life for us.* He taught the universal love of God to men, and the greatness of it; he published his favor to the world; he declared his rich mercy to sinners indiscriminately; and he confirmed the truth of these things by his death: and the dispositions he manifested in his sufferings afforded a fine illustration of them. The death of Christ is intended for a testimony: (1 Tim. ii. 6.) and it testifies the truth and grace, the love and mercy of God to his creatures. As a seal is a testimony to the truth of what the writing contains to which it is affixed, and gives validity to it, even so his death ratifies the gospel of the grace of God, and establishes its validity. Hence the value and importance of his death, in removing all unworthy thoughts of God, as a wrathful, vindictive being, and in assuring sinners of the divine love and mercy to them, that they may receive the knowledge of forgiveness of sins, have hope in God, enjoy his salvation, and be drawn to obedience. This surely is an end worthy of the Father of mercies in commanding his Son to die.

The death of Christ exhibits the most perfect example of obedience to the divine will. The Father gave him commandment to lay down his life: and he became obedient to death, even the death of

the cross. It was the most difficult act of obedience, because, all circumstances considered, the most painful, that ever man was called to perform. The opportunity he had of avoiding it, had he declined from the path of duty, rendered his obedience, in not shrinking from the painful task, the more exemplary. The fitness and utility, of the person who was destined to the highest dignity and authority, being first called to perform the most difficult and painful obedience, must be manifest. *It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.* (Heb. ii. 10.)

The sufferings of Christ were necessary on his own account. This position may startle some persons, but it will be found capable of proof. Pain and suffering are comprehended in that plan of discipline by which the Almighty leads his creatures, as the pupils of experience, to a state of perfection. Sufferings do not always imply sin in the sufferer. Infants, who are not capable of being under any law, consequently cannot be the subjects of transgression, for where there is no law there is no transgression, are the subjects of pain and suffering. All the inferior creatures, to whom it will not be said sin is imputed, suffer and die. The most virtuous men have frequently been the most afflicted, instance Job, and Jeremiah. Pain and suffering seem necessary, in various instances, to the formation, of truly great and extraordinary characters. On this general view

of things the sufferings of Christ may be thought necessary on his own account.

The greatest characters have been formed in the school of adversity, in this school the character of Christ, if not formed, was perfected. If perfected through suffering, it follows that his sufferings were necessary to make him perfect. It appears that he had to acquire knowledge, to attain virtue, and every thing which constitutes excellency of character, in a gradual way, by attention to the circumstances he passed through, and the will of his Father concerning him; for it behoved him to be made in all things like unto his brethren. (Heb. ii. 17.) *Though he were a Son yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered:* (Heb. v. 8.) and by so learning he became perfect: consequently his sufferings were necessary to teach him obedience. It appears that his character was formed, by the excitement of his powers, the exercise of his feelings, and the trial of his virtues, in the painful scenes he endured.

By means of his sufferings and death he was qualified for the exalted station he fills. Had he not suffered and died he must have remained a stranger to those incidents in the present state of man, which are the most difficult to bear with firmness and composure: at least he could have known them only in idea. Had he not deeply felt how could he have known how to sympathize with others, and compassionate them? How could he have been touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and have been a

merciful high-priest in things partaining to God. Thus it was needful for him to suffer and die, that he might be qualified to act with propriety in his exalted station, to sustain the office which he bears as head of the church, and to pursue, with proper feeling, the general interest of mankind.

The sufferings and death of Christ were necessary for the completion of the work which the Father gave him to do, to condemn sin in the flesh, and complete the ministration of righteousness. He was to be an evidence to the world of the practicability of standing against sin, and of doing the whole will of God. His whole ministry, spirit, and conduct, was a condemnation of sin, and he resisted to blood striving against it. He preached righteousness in the great congregation, he exemplified its purest principles in his whole temper and conduct, and by his obedience to death he completed his ministry.

His obedience to death was necessary in order to his being rewarded with all power in heaven and earth, i. e. to his commission being extended to the whole world, Gentiles as well as Jews; for he declared before that he was only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Had he not performed the work he could not have attained the reward. Without his submitting to death his obedience had been incomplete: and had he not completed it he must have lost his reward: he would not have been exalted and glorified: he would not have been made Lord and Christ, nor have been exalted as a Prince and a Savior, salvation would not have been preached in his

name to the Gentiles, he would not have been appointed to raise the dead, to judge the world.—Under these views, Christ's submitting to death appears to have been necessary, in order to his attaining all his future greatness, and to his becoming a universal blessing to mankind. This gives uncommon importance to his death.

His death was necessary to complete his example. He can be an example to us only so far as he was like us in nature, state and circumstances, or as we are capable of becoming like him. Had he never suffered he could not have been an example to us in suffering: Had he not died he could not have been an example to us in dying. Had he not voluntary died a violent death for the sake of truth and righteousness, he could not have been an example to those who are called to submit to a voluntary death rather than deviate from truth and rectitude. Had he not perfectly obeyed he could not have been an example of perfect obedience. But now by his death his character is perfected, his qualifications are completed, his testimony is finished, his obedience is tried and found perfect, he received a glorious reward, and we have a suitable and perfect example of every excellency attainable by us.

Christ died to introduce the gospel to the Gentiles, to break down the middle wall of separation between the Jews and them, and to confirm the gospel as a covenant of mercy and grace to mankind. As his commission before his death extended only to the Jews, and his personal ministry related solely to

them, he had no authority to send the gospel to the Gentiles, till after he rose from the dead, when, as the reward of his obedience to death, he received such additional authority, as extended his mission and ministrations to the whole world: on the ground of which he commissioned his Apostles, to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Hence it is that it is said, he hath broken down the middle wall of partition, reconciled Jews and Gentiles in one body, and to have made peace between them, by his cross, to have brought the Gentiles nigh by his blood, and to have abolished the hand writing of ordinances which was against them; namely, because, as the reward of his obedience to death, he has received a commission which embraces the whole world, and is appointed to minister all the blessings of grace and salvation to the whole human race. As covenants in ancient times were confirmed by blood, and God's covenant with Israel was confirmed with the blood of their sacrifices, so the gospel which is spoken of as a covenant, because in it God hath promised his mercy and favor to the penitent and obedient, was confirmed by the death of Christ. Hence his blood is called the blood of the New Testament, and the blood of the everlasting covenant. In reference to this it is called the blood of sprinkling, and is said to speak better things than *Abel:* because under the law the covenant was confirmed by the sprinkling of blood, and whatever the covenant expresses, the blood which confirms it is, by a figure of speech, said to express. Thus Jesus

had a great object before him in submitting to death, an important design to carry into effect, to attain to the high honor, of becoming a universal blessing to the world, by receiving as the reward of his obedience, a commission and authority to extend the gospel to the Gentiles, and as he died to confirm its blessings to mankind: hence it is said that for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, despised the shame, and is set down on the right hand of God. (Heb. xii. 2.)

In reference to mankind, the sufferings and death of Christ, like the whole of his life and ministry, lead to one point, and are in subserviance to one grand design, their salvation. He came to seek and to save that which was lost, God sent him into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. His public ministry had for its object the salvation of his hearers. The gospel which he made known is called the word of salvation. Influenced by the same motives as had guided him, and with the same end as he had pursued, throughout his life and ministry, he patiently submitted to his painful and ignominious death. His Apostles, commissioned by him, carried forward the same design after his ascension. They called sinners to repentance, they held forth the word of life, they preached the forgiveness of sins, they testified the resurrection of Jesus, and in connexion with it the resurrection of all the dead, they published the same doctrine as he had done before them, their whole ministry had the same object as his, the

salvation of men. As Christ in dying had this important object in view, and his death so eminently subserves it, he is said to have died for them, to have died for their sins, and they are said to have redemption through his blood. Yet it is by the knowledge of his gospel, and its influence upon their hearts, they are actually saved; but it was by his obedience to death he confirmed that knowledge to them, and as the reward of that obedience he received authority to communicate it to the Gentiles, with all the blessings accompanying it. Hence it is true that he died for our salvation.

With respect to the church of God, many important ends are effected by his death. By confirming the new dispensation, and establishing its ministration, he has redeemed, or delivered back, the church from under the law, or dispensation of Moses, with all its curses: and fully introduced them to the superior light, liberty, and privileges of the gospel. Hence it is said, *When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* (Gal. iv. 4, 5.) By confirming the gospel with all its influences, especially to the Gentiles, who before were without strength, he hath afforded them all the information, motives, divine assistance, and strength necessary for them to become a holy people. Hence it is said, *He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works:* (Tit. ii. 14.) and, that

he *loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.* (Eph. v. 25, 26, 27.) All this he does by the influence and operation of the gospel upon those who believe; but he is said to have given himself for the church that he might do it, because he gave himself to confirm the gospel to them, by which it is effected.

Thus it appears that we derive many and great blessings from the death of Christ, and an important design, to effect which he died, is discoverable, independent of the notion of his making satisfaction for sins. It is irreverent, and discovers great inattention to the scriptures for men to say, that if Christ did not die to make atonement to divine justice for our sins, we derive no benefit from his death. Is the gospel, with all its blessings no benefit? Is it no benefit to have the doctrine of immortality ratified, and made plain to the meanest capacity? Is it no benefit to have the strongest confirmation of all the divine promises? Is it no benefit to have salvation brought to us, and all the means of enjoying it placed before us? Is it no benefit to have all the means of becoming holy and happy? If these be benefits, and surely they are of great value, it follows that we derive many great benefits from the death of Christ. Is nothing to be thought a benefit but our having him to be righteous in our place and stead, and his righteousness transferred to us? Will nothing satisfy us

but an impunity in sin? Alas! were the benefits so much contended for, by our opponents real, they would do us no good. Whilst it continues true that there is no peace to the wicked, it matters not whose righteousness we imagine is imputed to us, it can never give us solid peace: and if we be made truly righteous in our own persons the imputation of the righteousness of another will be superfluous. Instead of amusing ourselves about imaginary benefits of the death of Christ, which the scriptures know nothing of, we ought to avail ourselves of the solid advantages afforded us through his death: and labour to attain that purity and holiness of heart and life, that devotedness to God and usefulness to men, to which the gospel, confirmed to us by his death, is calculated to lead us. No further than we become like Christ, in our views and motives, temper and conduct, can his death savingly benefit us.

CHAPTER THIRD.

The connexion of the death of Christ with the dispensation of the gospel.

MUCH having already been said, in the preceding part of this work, on the connexion of the death of Christ with the dispensation of the gospel, and the salvation of men, I shall barely add a few brief remarks, to bring the subject more pointedly into view. If we would understand how his death is connected with the gospel, we must enquire what place he occupies in that ministration, and how the whole of his life and teaching are associated with it.

The gospel dispensation was introduced by Jesus Christ. He was God's messenger, or minister, to reveal, or communicate it. This work he performed with the utmost fidelity; even at the expense of his own ease, reputation, and life. Circumstanced as things were, influenced as the jewish rulers and priests were by prejudice, bigotry, pride, and various corrupt interests and passions, it was impossible he should accomplish this work without the sacrifice of his life. All the reproach and persecution he encountered arose from the offence which his doctrine gave, the umbrage which his spirit and conduct oc-

casioned: nor could he shun raising all the malignant passions of the evil minded against him, without shunning to declare the whole counsel of God, and deviating from the line of duty which his Father had marked out for him. Consequently his death stands connected with the gospel as it was occasioned by his faithfully discharging his duty, as God's messenger, appointed to communicate it.

The gospel, being a testimony to men, could not obtain credit, and influence upon the human heart, any further than it was attested: it was reasonable that he who was appointed to communicate it should give it the signature and seal of truth. His miracles were a strong attestation to the truth of his mission, but had he shown any cowardice or timidity in the moment of difficulty, had he declined to confirm his doctrine by his sufferings and death, the attestation of its truth had not been completed. The state of things at the time, in particular the opposition made to him and his doctrine, rendered it necessary that he should submit to die in support of what he taught: and his sufferings and death, connected with his miracles and resurrection, fully attested it.

The life of Christ was a striking exemplification of the nature and tendency of his doctrine, that it was pure and benevolent, and had a tendency to purity and benevolence. Nor was his death a less striking exemplification of it. Indeed in his death the peculiar excellency of his doctrine and its happy influence upon the mind, appeared in the most impressive light. What were the doctrines which Jesus taught

his disciples? Humility and meekness, gentleness and forbearance, patience and resignation to the will of God, love to enemies, to suffer without resistance, to forgive injuries and render good for evil, and entire dependance on God. All these doctrines were strikingly exemplified by him in his sufferings. He manifested no disdain, no haughty contempt, when arrested by a base rabble, and handled by them in the rudest manner; but submissively gave himself into their hands. Through the whole of his mock trial, and cruel treatment, he discovered the same humility and meekness. *He was led like a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so he opened not his mouth.* In the most trying of moments he was perfectly resigned to the will of God; with the whole scene of his sufferings before him he said, *not my will but thine be done.* He suffered without the least murmur, with the utmost firmness and patience. He manifested nothing but love to his enemies, under all their brutal treatment, he made no resistance; he not only forgave them, but, with his dying breath, prayed that God would forgive them; he rendered them good for evil, by directing that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached to them, after his resurrection. Throughout he manifested entire dependance on God, and died saying, *into thy hands I commit my spirit.* Thus his maxims were proved practicable, his doctrine received the fairest illustration, and his death is found to bear the same relation to the gospel as practice bears to theory.

The death of Christ stands connected with all the circumstances by which the dispensation of the gospel was introduced. Those which preceded it received their confirmation from, or were perfected by it. As the reward of such unexampled obedience he received power to extend the mission of his Apostles to all nations, and all the extraordinary gifts of the spirit to qualify them for the work: he also received all spiritual gifts and blessings to communicate to mankind by the gospel. On the ground of that authority which he received as the reward of his obedience to death the gospel was sent to the Gentiles and its ministration is still continued in the world.

The ministry of Christ at first was limited; but, when he had proved himself faithful, and his obedience was tried and made fully manifest by his death, it was extended to all nations, he was constituted the head of every man, the head over all things, the Lord of all, i. e. both Jews and Gentiles, he was fully instated in his office as head of the church, and appointed heir of all things. Hence it appears that he is at the head of the gospel dispensation, and that the whole ministration of it is lodged in his hands. Consequently, all its blessings and privileges are said to be in Christ Jesus, those who minister under it are his servants, those who believe and obey the gospel are said to be in him, every thing under it is referred to him, as the person whom God hath appointed to preside at the head of the present œconomy, to manage every thing relative to it: and hence Christ is *said to be* all in all. To the honor and dignity of pre-

siding at the head of the gospel dispensation, as extended to the whole world, he attained through his sufferings and death, and possesses his present exalted station, as the reward of his having perfectly obeyed.

Under these views the death of Christ stands connected with the dispensation of the gospel, and, thus viewed, it is an event of great magnitude and importance: it has a bearing upon the principal facts, doctrines, and privileges of christianity: it is associated with the general system, and comes into argument in many practical points of view: nor is it easy for us to overlook the obligations we are under to him for dying to confirm so many blessings to us.

CHAPTER FOURTH.

The connexion of the death of Christ with the salvation of men.

WHEN the salvation of men is ascribed to the death of Christ, we are not to consider his death abstractedly, but in connexion with various other important circumstances, in fact with the whole of the gospel dispensation. His death may be considered as including the whole of his testimony, because it finished and confirmed it: and as put for the whole of his ministry and obedience, because it was the completion of both.

His death has a connexion with the salvation of men, as he endured all his sufferings with a view to the effecting of their deliverance, and submitted to death in order to the attainment of that power and authority in the exercise of which he does actually save them, by the gospel. As the reward of his obedience to death, he is exalted as a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. As he patiently endured all his sufferings that he might make known salvation to mankind, and obtain, as a reward, the authority and power of communicating it to the world, and as his death was the grand confirmation of the gospel, it may well be said that we are

saved through his death. Had not he submitted to die we know of no way in which salvation would have come to the Gentiles, of no person who would have been invested with power and authority to communicate it. It is certainly true that God could have opened a way, he could have appointed a suitable person for the purpose; but this is only saying he could have done what he has actually done in the appointment of Jesus Christ. The person whom God had raised up and appointed to be a Savior must have been anointed with the holy spirit and with power, he must have been the Messiah, he must have had a divine mission, he must have been qualified for the work, he must have been obedient as Jesus was, have performed the same work, in order to his receiving the same reward. We are not capable of conceiving how a different method could have been adopted, consistently with all the circumstances, and the greatest good of the moral system; for God will ever raise to the highest dignity, and honor with the execution of the most important services, the most worthy. Jesus is the person who hath proved himself worthy of the trust committed to his hands, and, as our salvation is the object of it, we are under very high obligations to him.

As it is an unquestionable fact that sinners are actually saved by the gospel, the death of Christ stands connected with their salvation, as that which has confirmed to them the gospel and all its blessings. Suppose a man should set up a claim to a large estate, and to establish that claim in a court of law, present

an unsealed deed, or writing, he would be told he could claim nothing upon the ground of that writing, because, whatever it might express, it had never been confirmed, of course was not valid; suppose, instead of presenting any writing, he should merely present a detached seal, fairly impressed, and on the ground of that make his claim, he would be told he could claim nothing on that ground, for the seal could express nothing, prove nothing, unless affixed to a writing which expressed what it was intended to confirm. Even so the gospel had it not been ratified by the death of Christ would have been no ground on which the Gentiles could have claimed the privilege of being fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of faith; and the death of Christ, detached from the gospel, of the truth and validity of which it is an attestation, would be like a seal not attached to any writing, on the ground of which nothing could be claimed. But suppose the man claiming the estate, should present in court a writing which expresses his title, signed and sealed, when the contents of the writing were understood, he might lay his finger upon the seal, and say, 'on the ground of this seal I am entitled to the estate,' because the seal would establish the validity of the writing. Just such is the gospel, it comes to us confirmed and ratified by the death of Christ, and its blessings are frequently mentioned in connexion with his death simply, though they are enjoyed through an understanding of the truth, and its influence on the heart,

because his death has confirmed to us that truth, and the privileges connected with it.

The death of Christ is connected with our salvation, as we are called in order to the attainment of it, to be conformed to his death, figuratively, to be crucified with him, to reckon ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God. Christians are said to be planted together in the likeness of his death, that they may be also in the likeness of his resurrection. It is only as we attain to the same spirit of self-denial, and crucifixion of the flesh in its affections and desires, which he manifested in his sufferings and death, that we can attain the actual enjoyment of salvation. His death has to do with our salvation, as, when duly considered in all its circumstances, it has a tendency to influence us to entire submission to the will of God, and all those dispositions towards men, which will greatly promote our deliverance from evil.

Christ having learned obedience, and being made perfect, through sufferings, became the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey him. In consequence of his obedience to death he was invested with authority to dispense present salvation to sinners who repent and believe the gospel, and eternal salvation, hereafter, to all the obedient. And if we would attain eternal salvation we must be conformed to his death, as he hath suffered for us in the flesh we must arm ourselves with the same mind, that we may cease from sin: we must be content to suffer

with him, if we would reign with him; to suffer reproach, to have our names cast out as evil, for our attachment to truth and righteousness; to bear injuries patiently, without personal resentment, and to render good for evil: we must be willing to be crucified with him to all the evil principles, ungodly maxims, corrupt interests, and wicked practices of the age in which we live. Under these views the death of Christ stands connected with the salvation of men.

APPENDIX.

1. *Mr. Jerram's variations.*

Mr. Jerram's Letters on atonement have undergone some material alterations since their appearance in the Universal Theological Magazine. Slight alterations I shall let pass unnoticed; but a few remarkable positions, and reasonings, which he has thought fit to drop, no doubt for some weighty reason, I think proper to state here, with my reply to them: I do this the rather because, though he has availed himself of my reply in the alterations which he has made, and labored in consequence of it to be more cautious in his assertions, he has not had the candor to drop the least hint of the existence of a reply.

In reply to my first reason for rejecting the doctrine of satisfaction he had said, (U. T. M. V. vi. P. 142.) 'If there be any weight in your argument, it will prove that the doctrine of the *new birth* is not scriptural, as it is not mentioned in any of these sermons,' i. e. The sermons of the Apostles mentioned in the Acts. This passage he has now omitted. I replied to it, 'Though the phrase *new birth* does not occur in the Acts, yet *repentance*, *faith*, and *conversion* are expressly mentioned, among the things which the Apostles preached; and, I think, you will admit these comprehend an entire change of heart and life.'

In reply to another of my reasons Mr. J. had said, 'The case is capable, I presume, of being set in such a point of view, as to take away the weight of the argument, suppose an insolvent debtor had no possible means of procuring a surety, and his creditor should provide one, might it not be said, with propriety, that the creditor had forgiven him all his debts? And is not this the case in the present instance? Who is the creditor, and who the sinner's friend?' (U. T. M. V. vi. P. 182.) In answer to this I said, 'All that the creditor does, in your supposed case, is the providing a surety, that he may receive payment. It matters not, so far as relates to the present argument, who provides the surety, if the creditor receive full payment, no part of the debt can remain for him to forgive, Z. owes X. £1000; Z. has nothing to pay; X. will not remit the debt, but casts him into prison, and determines to keep him there till the whole is paid. Z. can find no one to be his surety to pay it for him. X. finds Y. and influences him to become surety for Z. and pay the whole of his debt for him. X. having received full payment, informs Z. what Y. has done for him; and adds, that 'as Y. has paid the debt, I will now freely forgive it.' Z. replies, 'there is nothing left for you to forgive, for

you say, you have received full payment; and it is rather insulting to talk of forgiving me my debt, after you are paid all that I owed you.' But says X. 'I provided a surety for you; and if I had not you never could have found one.' 'True,' replies Z. 'and for that I thank you,' but had not my generous friend Y. discharged the debt, I might have perished before you would have forgiven it.'

He added, in the same page, 'The *effect* is the same to him, (the sinner) as if he had been freely pardoned.' This led me to ask, 'Do you not here, Sir, confess that the sinner is not freely pardoned, but that the effect is the same to him as if that were really the case? Yet you cannot be ignorant that the Apostles taught the doctrine of free forgiveness; and not merely that the effect was the same to the sinner; the case in itself is very different, for the full penalty being inflicted, though not on him, yet on another in his stead, there can be nothing more to inflict: consequently free pardon is out of the question.'

Another remarkable passage Mr. J. has suppressed. He had said, 'The object of justice is the inflicting of the penalty, and provided that be done, the person is indifferent,' (U. T. M. V. vi. P. 183.) on which I remarked that, 'The judge who should declare it a matter of indifference to him, whether the person he condemned and left for execution, was the real criminal, or an innocent man, would, by the unanimous consent of all civilized nations, be declared unfit to sit on the seat of justice: and I presume divine justice is not less perfect than human justice. *Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?* I am glad to find him candid enough to suppress the above absurd notion respecting the object of justice.

Another suppressed passage contained this assertion, 'Though a *creditor* may frankly forgive his debtor, the concern being merely of a *personal* nature, yet it does not follow that *a judge* can as frankly forgive a condemned criminal.' (*Ibid.* P. 188.) To this I replied, 'Though an earthly judge cannot as frankly forgive a criminal, as a creditor can a debtor, because he is not absolutely independent, but accountable to them who appointed him to the office of judge: yet it does not follow that God, who is absolutely independent, and accountable to no one, cannot: surely you will admit that *he* can, in every case, act according to his sovereign will and pleasure.'

In another instance he has dropped his argument entirely, and substituted others. He had said, 'It no more follows that, because all are not *exempted* from punishment, therefore *a sufficient price* for such exemption was not paid, than that because all the captives did not return from an enemy's country, therefore a sufficient price for their redemption was not given. An infallible medicine may be offered to a sick man, and yet if he refuse to take that medicine he cannot receive any benefit from it.' (U. T. M. V. vi. P. 189.) This argument he has now abandoned. I replied to it as follows, 'I admit that *a sufficient price* may be paid to an enemy for the redemption of captives, and they may notwithstanding refuse to return; but this, *Sir, is not* a case in point: for you do not say that Christ gave an equi-

valent to the enemy who held us in bondage, to induce him to consent to our liberation. Besides, a mere state of captivity, and the execution of criminals for rebellion against their lawful sovereign, are two very different things. Sinners are not only in captivity to sin, they are also exposed to punishment: and if Christ suffered the punishment due to them, to the full satisfaction of justice, how can that punishment be justly inflicted on them also, though they choose to continue in their captivity to sin, seeing justice is already satisfied? You say 'The object of justice is the inflicting of the penalty, and provided that be done, the *person* is indifferent.' If Christ suffered the penalty, justice must, according to your own views, have gained its object: consequently, it can have no further penalty to inflict. I also admit that 'An infallible medicine may be offered to a sick man, and yet if he refuse to take that medicine he cannot receive any benefit from it,' but surely there is a great difference between offering a medicine to a sick man, and buying off a criminal from the gallows: in the former case it would depend on the choice of the sick man whether he would take the medicine; but in the latter, if the supreme magistrate accepted the price as an equivalent for the life of the criminal, and owned that thereby justice was as completely satisfied, as it would have been had the condemned man been executed, he could not with any appearance of justice order the criminal to execution. This latter case is applicable to the satisfaction scheme; but those which you state are not at all in point: because in them the will of man is supposed to be concerned, but you will not say it depended on our will whether Christ should make satisfaction for sins, or justice accept of that satisfaction.'

Mr. J. had said, 'As God forgives us even as debtors, by means of a provision of his own planning, and by a sacrifice of his own, our forgiveness is perfectly free.' (U. T. M. V. vi. P. 191.) This passage he now thinks proper to omit. I replied to it thus, 'This, Sir, does not appear from the whole of your statement, for, though the provision, &c. be of his own planning, if he receive payment (call it an *equivalent*, a *consideration*, or what you please, it is something which amounts to satisfactory payment in the eye of the law) before he cancels the debt, it cannot be said that he freely forgives the debt. F. owes D. £500. and has nothing to pay. D. arrests and casts him into prison. F. supplicates and begs that, as he is insolvent, D. would cancel the debt, D. insists he cannot in justice either cancel the debt or set F. at liberty until it be paid; but D. has a Son, a very generous youth, and quite as rich as his Father; D. desires and commands him to pay F's. debt; and he, being very compassionate, and desirous of pleasing his Father, pays the whole debt due from F. upon which F. is set at liberty. The question is, can it be said that D. freely forgives the debt? I think, you, Sir, will hardly answer in the affirmative, yet D. provided his Son to pay it. According to your reasoning, before a christian either forgives a debt due to him from an insolvent person, or an injury done to his person, character, or property, he ought to find somebody to pay him the debt, or to make him full reparation for the injury; and when he has

received such payment, or reparation, what remains for him to forgive? Surely, Sir, if you review your own reasoning you will find it hard to reconcile it with the gospel doctrine of free forgiveness of sins, through Jesus Christ. You may give the subject an air of plausibility in the eyes of the partisans of a system; but are *you* perfectly satisfied with your own arguments? I know that yours is the popular side of the question, and that the man who opposes it must expect reproach; but truth is more worth than reputation, friends, and every other worldly thing.' It seems my opponent was not fully satisfied with his arguments, otherwise we are at a loss to tell why he has suppressed some of them, and adopted others.

Mr. J's. fourth inference, in his last letter was, '*That the object of justice is the execution of the penalty; or what is the same thing the reinstating of the general interests on their former ground; and whether that is done the person is indifferent.*' (U. T. M. V. vii. P. 123.) This he has suppressed and adopted the following in its place. '*That as it is the office of public justice, to maintain the laws in their vigor, and to guard the general interests from injury, whatever secures these objects, answers all the indispensable claims of justice.*' (Letters on atonement, P. 89.) In reply to the former I said, 'I deny, Sir, that the object of divine justice in punishing is merely the execution of the penalty; because the admission of it would involve the supposition that God sometimes acts merely from a principle of revenge or retaliation, and punishment is inflicted merely for the sake of punishing; but such a supposition would be highly dishonorable to his character as the *God of love*, the *Father of mercies*, and irreconcileable with what the scriptures assert, that *he is good to all*, and that *his tender mercies are over all his works*, that *his goodness abideth continually*, that *his compassions fail not*, that *his mercy endureth for ever*, that *he doth not afflict willingly*. I should rather say, that the object of justice is the correction or removal of evil, and that the execution of the penalty is a mean to this end; but if so, according to the nature and fitness of things, the penalty, when executed, must fall upon the real transgressor; the executing of it upon an innocent person could not answer the purpose, there being no evil in him to correct. Were I to grant that the object of justice is merely the execution of the penalty, it would not follow that the person is indifferent, the fitness of things would require that it should be executed on the guilty, not on the innocent. Reason suggests what scripture declares, that *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD*, (Prov. xvii. 15.) Do not your reasoning suppose God to do what is declared an abomination to him, i. e. to condemn and punish a just one?'

'*The reinstating of the general interests on their former ground*, does not appear to be exactly the same thing, with *the execution of the penalty*. The infliction of the penalty may or may not be necessary: this will depend on circumstances. The removal of evil reinstates the general interests on their former ground, whether it takes *place by* the penitence and submission of the sinner, or be effected

by the infliction of punishment. God's end is, not the destruction, but the recovery of the sinner; the fitness of this end to be pursued by such a being is manifest; if the offender be recovered to the paths of rectitude, the necessity of punishment is superseded. The mere execution of the penalty, aside from the effects produced by it, reinstates nothing. Suppose the inhabitants of a province were in rebellion against their lawful sovereign, would it be most agreeable to *the nature and fitness of things*, for him to condemn his dutiful and obedient Son to death, and cause him to be executed in the place and stead of the rebels; alledging as the ground of his extraordinary conduct, that the penalty of death had been incurred by his rebellious subjects, that it must be inflicted on some one before he could extend mercy to the revolted province or receive their submission, and that in the eye of justice it was a matter of indifference whether the penalty was executed on his obedient child, or the insurgents, if so be his child was willing to bear it? Would the execution of the penalty on his innocent Son reinstate the general interests on their former ground? Who would not admire the obedient and generous conduct of the Son, and at the same time execrate the unfeeling disposition, injustice, and cruelty of the Father? Would not the insurgents when they heard of it, be ready to exclaim, 'We have acted properly in renouncing our allegiance to a monster, who can vent his fury on his innocent child, and satiate his vengeance in his guiltless blood?' Sir, this picture is not overcharged, it is what you ought to prove agreeable to the nature and fitness of things; because illustrative of the views which your system presents to us of the character and justice of God; but how different to the reality as presented to view in his works and by his word! Suppose, on the contrary, the sovereign sent his Son to the revolted province with a proclamation of mercy, to offer free pardon to all who would submit and return to their allegiance, and to threaten with the severest punishment all who refused to submit; commanding him at the same time patiently to endure all the insults and cruel treatment of the rebels, and to manifest goodness and love to them in return, assuring him that life should be secured to him, and his reward be great. He goes to the province, opens his commission, proclaims the mercy of his Father, offers pardon to the rebellious, and invites them in the most persuasive and affectionate manner to submit to their lawful sovereign; but they in return load him with reproaches, insult him in the most barbarous manner, put him to the torture, and cast him in a mangled state into a noisome dungeon; he bears it all without a murmur, and continues to manifest pity and love to them to the last: some of the inhabitants become his companions from his first appearance in the province, these he commissions to make the proclamation more generally known, to continue persuading the rebels to submission after his departure, and in all things to imitate him: his Father rescues him from the dungeon, takes him to his palace, and commits the government and administration of the affairs of the revolted province to his hands: the Son by the proclamation, his com-

duct, his patient sufferings, exercise of mercy, ministration of justice in punishing the incorrigible, at length restores perfect order, and reinstates the general interests upon the most solid basis. Would not this be more agreeable to the nature and fitness of things, than the former description? It is certainly better adapted to illustrate the character and conduct of God, and the mediation of his Son. You may take it, Sir, as an illustration of our sentiments.'

I will notice one more passage which Mr. J. has suppressed in the republication of his letters. He had said, 'I grant that it is difficult to separate the idea of personal punishment from personal demerit; but still the ideas are separable. *Demerit* and *penalty* are by no means synonimous. While we acknowledge that the former is personal, we deny that the other is necessarily so.' (U. T. M. V. vii. P. 124.) To this I replied, 'You endeavor to separate demerit and penalty; but reason, common sense, the law of Moses, and the gospel of Christ, always connect them together. Penalty is incurred by demerit; nor can any thing but demerit justly subject any one to penalty. Whatever a man may suffer, it cannot properly be called penalty, unless it be inflicted on him for acting wrong. So far as *demerit* and *penalty* are separated, and virtue and penalty associated, justice is outraged, and the good of society interrupted.'

The reader is requested to judge, by the preceding specimens, whether Mr. J. by abandoning some of his positions and arguments, has not given evidence that he is so far driven from the ground he first occupied.

2. *Remarks on the Notes appended to Mr. Jerram's Letters on Atonement.*

I shall here remark on such passages in Mr. J's. Notes as may be supposed to have a bearing on the general argument. His uncandid and contemptuous treatment of writers in general on our side of the question, as if they were a set of ignorant and presumptuous pedants, deserves no reply. The learned and pious labors of those he considers as heterodox, who have flourished in different ages, to say nothing of several great living characters, are a sufficient refutation of the calumny which some reputed orthodox writers, of the present day, think fit to lavish on those who resist their dogmas. The manner in which Mr. J. and Dr. Magee, have spoken of Dr. Priestley and his writings comes too late to destroy the well earned reputation, for learning and piety, of that justly celebrated writer, or to prevent the increasing attention of the impartial part of mankind to his valuable writings: and their want of liberality and good temper is no proof of the goodness of their cause. Whenever Mr. J. has occasion to mention the critical examination of particular passages of scripture, he seems greatly alarmed, his terrified imagination seems to forbode the overthrow of truth: perhaps some readers will consider this as a proof that the notions for which he contends have nothing to support them but detached passages arbitrarily explained.

The quotation from Dr. Priestley in Note 4, even in the mutilated state in which it is placed before the reader by Mr. J. furnishes no weak argument against the popular notion of atonement. By making the quotation he has exhibited an objection to his own hypothesis which he cannot solve: his barely saying, after Dr. Magee, that by Dr. P's mode of reasoning 'a great part of scripture is swept away at one stroke, under the name of figure, allusion, &c. &c.' is no solution of the difficulty. To have proved Dr. P's reasoning fallacious, he ought to have proved that the forms of expression alluded to are not figurative, &c. but this he has prudently omitted attempting.

The quotation from Dr. Magee in Note 5, substantiates what it is intended to destroy: for it admits that God's justice is modified by his goodness, while it asserts that his goodness is modified by his justice, and that the *whole divine nature* should be viewed *as one great impulse to what is best*: whence it follows that I was right in asserting, *His justice consists in doing that which is most right for infinite wisdom and goodness to do.*

Note 6 contains a quotation from Dr. Magee, intended to prove that under the law 'atonements *were* made in cases where, *without atonement*, life was forfeited.' This is said to appear from Lev. xvii 11. where blood is said to make an atonement for the soul; but it by no means follows that because blood was given on the altar to make an atonement, reconciliation, cleansing, or dedication, for, or on account of the soul, to bring the people nigh to God in his worship, therefore their lives were all previously forfeited; for the same thing was appointed to be done with blood for those who labored under certain infirmities, and for inanimate things, in neither of which cases any forfeiture of life can be supposed. The Doctor also asserts that this appears from the unbending rigor of the law in general, which he supposes to have denounced death against every violation of it. This however is not expressed in the passages to which he refers: and surely he must know that there were violations of the law which were to be punished by fine, or stripes, and to which the penalty of death did not attach: consequently the law was not that sanguinary code which he represents it. Is it doing credit to divine revelation to represent it as containing a law which confounds all degrees of crime, and denounces death for every petty offence? Is not such a representation as dangerous as it is unjust, and calculated to bring divine revelation into contempt? If such a law be ascribed to *Draco* let it not be ascribed to *the Father of mercies*. The Doctor says further that it appears 'from the specific cases of *perjury*, (Lev. vi. 3.) and of *profane swearing*, (v. 4.) for which atonements were appointed, notwithstanding the strict sentence of the law was death. (Exod. xx. 7. Lev. xxiv. 16.)' To set aside the argument he would support by the above cases it is only necessary to make the law consistent with itself. To suppose that it positively commanded that the same person should *surely be put to death*, that all the congregation should *certainly stone him*, and yet that he should be permitted to bring his

offering, on the ground of which his life should be preserved, is to make the precepts of the law contradict and destroy each other.—To avoid this it must be admitted that the cases stated in the above passages of the law are not identical, but different: and a careful examination, and comparison of one part of the law with another will authorize this admission. It does not follow that because a man was guilty therefore he was under the sentence of death; for death was not the penalty of every crime. Thus it appears that the position, *that atonements were made in cases where life was forfeited*, is totally unfounded. Dr. Magee says, after all, 'It is true, indeed, that death is not expressly denounced, in those cases in which atonements were allowed.' This is in fact giving up his argument; for how could one creature die in the place and stead of another in cases in which the law did not denounce death.

Note 7 seems intended to prove that, under some view or other, Christ effected the reconciliation of God to men. This is what Dr. Magee seems to aim at proving, in the passages referred to by Mr. Jerram. Indeed these gentlemen have not expressed themselves on this point in an open and explicit manner; but either their reasoning must be designed to prove this, or it has no aim. The idea of reconciling God is so repugnant to reason, so contrary to the letter and spirit of the gospel, that it need excite no surprise that its advocates choose to involve it in obscurity. In support of so absurd a notion Mr. J. though alarmed at the appearance of Greek critcisms in the writings of his opponents, without hesitation refers his readers to the Greek criticisms of a reputed orthodox writer. I leave Dr. Magee and Mr. J. to obviate the glaring absurdities involved in the notion of God's being reconciled.

Note 8 contains nothing which assumes the form of argument. It seems intended to place in a ridiculous light those who contend that various forms of expression in the New Testament should be understood figuratively; but no reasons are assigned why they ought to be construed literally: the advocate for determining every thing by the English version of the scriptures, on this occasion, contents himself with referring to the Greek criticisms of Dr. Magee.

Note 9 is intended to show, by quotations from Dr. Magee, that Dr. Priestley was mistaken in his representation of the opinions of the heathen concerning atonements. It is not necessary to enter here on an investigation of this point: for I see nothing the cause of reputed orthodoxy can gain even by the admission that Dr. M's representation of the religious notions of the ancient world is correct. He did not recollect, while painting the superstition of the heathen in the most odious colors, that he and his reputed orthodox brethren transfer the same ideas, in some degree, to the true God and the death of Christ.

In Note 10 Mr. Jerram asserts that when the terms 'bought, redeemed, ransomed,' &c. are used in reference to the death of Christ, 'We are often expressly told that they are to be understood in their *proper* sense;' but he has not been able to produce one passage in *which* we are told any such thing.

Note 11 is intended to prove that, under the law, atonements were to be made for all sins but such as sprung from a presumptuous defiance of the Creator; this, if granted, will prove nothing as to their being vicarious; for it will only prove that they were to be made in all cases in which the law did not denounce death on the transgressor; but the latter is the only case in which they could be vicarious.

If forgiveness could, in no case, be expected, but in virtue of the victim which was offered, as Mr. J. asserts, (Note 12.) it follows that the scriptures give a false representation. Psa. li. 16, 17.

Notes 13 and 14 contain nothing but what has been sufficiently noticed in other parts of this work.

Note 15 defines *the laws of God* to be those 'which have in them a kind of *moral necessity*, as arising out of the fitness of things:' and their *penalties* to be 'that which is necessary to enforce obedience to those laws, and to prevent the general system being injured by a breach of them.' But how can *the laws of God*, as thus defined sanction the punishment of the innocent? how is it possible their penalties should fall on an innocent person?

Note 16 refers to Archdeacon Paley as maintaining that *laws are a restraint on individual liberty*. But what has this to do with punishing the innocent and virtuous in the place and stead of the guilty and vicious? I suppose good laws are intended to restrain men only when they would do evil.

In Note 17 Mr. J. says 'Let me not here be understood as taking away the *discretionary* power of justice.' Yet the whole of his reasoning tends to destroy every idea of the *discretionary* power of divine justice; for if it cannot absolve the offender, however penitent he may be, unless it receives *a full and perfect satisfaction* for his sins, where is its *discretionary* power? To say that it is at the discretion of justice whether it will absolve the offender after it hath received full and perfect satisfaction for his offences, is, in fact, to say that justice can remain dissatisfied after receiving complete satisfaction; that it has the power of acting unjustly; that what perfectly satisfies it does not answer its demands: yet this is what his reasoning seems to suppose. What kind of satisfaction is that, what reparation for the evil of sin, by which 'the *disposition* of the sinner is by no means altered?' Yet this is the satisfaction for which Mr. J. contends.—For what sin did Christ make satisfaction, if he made none for 'the ingratitude, the presumption, the enmity, the rebellious spirit, &c. of the offender?' If he satisfied for all these how are they overlooked of mere grace? Such are the difficulties in which M. J. involves himself in this Note.

If from the time that it is supposed Christ died in the place and stead of sinners sin had never more been heard of, the circumstance quoted by Mr. J. in Note 18, might have illustrated his subject; but as things are it is totally inapposite; for he will admit that, if the infliction of the penalty of the law of Zaleucus put a stop to adultery among the Locrians, the death of Christ did not put an end to the practice of sin.

Compelled to admit that vicarious punishment, in certain criminal cases, would be inadmissible under human governments, Mr. J. attempts (in his last Note) to show that the same ground of objection does not lie against its admission under the divine government. Had he succeeded in this, the foundation of his arguments, in support of the fitness of substitution, i. e. the analogy between human and divine government, would have been destroyed. The only reason he gives for admitting under the divine government what would be pernicious under human governments is that 'provision is made in the gospel for the *renovation* of all those who receive any ultimate benefit by the death of Jesus Christ.' But, as he supposes the death of Christ to be 'a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world,' to obviate the difficulty, he should have proved that provision is made in the gospel for the *renovation* of all men. Though he asserts, he will find it impossible to prove, that the gospel contains more provision for the *renovation* of one man than another. After correcting his friend, Mr. Fuller, which he does in this note, from the manner in which he has already varied some of his expressions and arguments, I think it possible he may see reason to correct himself The charge of misrepresentation, which he attempts to fix on the liberal author of the *Sketch of different denominations among christians*, is as destitute of proof as he is of the candor of that respectable writer.



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